4.0 EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

This section of the DGEIS will provide an overview of the existing environmental, economic, and social conditions for the region and on a Campus-by-Campus level.

4.1 Regional Conditions

4.1.1 Air Resources

4.1.1.1 Climate

The climate of Erie County and the Niagara Frontier in general can be characterized as a moderately humid, continental-type climate. However, due to its proximity to Lakes Erie and Ontario, which have a strong moderating effect, the climate has a definitive "maritime" flavor.

The winters in Western New York are generally cloudy, cold, and with considerable amounts of lake-effect snow in localized areas. Several periods of thaws and rain during any typical winter is not uncommon.

During the spring and summer months, the City of Buffalo and other areas along Lake Erie can remain considerably cooler and more comfortable than the inland areas, and can experience more days of sunshine and fewer thunderstorms than the inland areas as well. In fact, Buffalo has the sunniest and driest summers of any major city in the Northeast, with just enough rain to keep vegetation green and lush.

Lake Erie will sometimes moderate the autumn temperatures into early November. However, cold fronts from Canada become common in late October, and when the cold air passes over the warmer Great Lakes, cloudy days become more prevalent. This weather pattern sets the stage for the lake-effect season, with the first measurable snow fall expected in mid-November.

4.1.1.2 Air Quality

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) monitor and measure six (6) criteria pollutants to determine ambient air quality. The six (6) criteria pollutants are carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), lead (Pb), ozone (O_3), and particulate matter (PM10). National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) have been established for each criteria pollutant.

Erie County is located in NYSDEC Region 9. Region 8 also includes Niagara, Wyoming, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, and Allegany Counties. Region 9 is divided into two air quality control regions—the Niagara Frontier Air Quality Region and the Southern Tier West Air Quality Control Region. A variety of air pollutants are measured at multiple, continuous monitoring stations throughout the Region.

Erie County is currently designated as a non-attainment area for ozone. A non-attainment area is an area that does not currently meet the national primary or secondary ambient air quality

standard for a criteria pollutant. Four ozone monitoring stations exist in the Region and all have exceeded the .08 parts per million (PPM) federal standard during the past three years. The ozone monitoring stations are located in Westfield, Dunkirk, Amherst, and Middleport.

Niagara County is also currently designated as a non-attainment area for ozone along with Erie County. On a positive note, both Erie and Niagara Counties are within attainment ranges for the remaining five (5) pollutant criteria.[7]

4.1.2 Transportation

4.1.2.1 Existing Conditions, Deficiencies, and Problems

Erie Community College is located within the Buffalo Metropolitan area. The road network within this region is well-developed, and radiates outward from Downtown Buffalo into the suburbs. A two-ring expressway system is in place, with the inner ring consisting of I-190 (Thruway Niagara Section), NY 198 (Scajaquada Expressway), NY33 (Kensington Expressway), and the Elm Street/Oak Street arterial set (adjacent to the City Campus). The outer ring consists of I-190 (River section), I-290 (Youngman Highway), I-90 (Thruway), and I-190 (South Niagara section). Radial routes include I-190 to Grand Island and Niagara Falls, I-990 to Amherst and Lockport, I-90 to Rochester, NY 400 to West Seneca and East Aurora, NY 219 to Orchard Park and Springville, I-90 to Eden and Brant, and NY5 to Lackawanna, Hamburg, and Evans. These routes are depicted below on *Figure 4.1.2-1 Existing Roadway Performance.*

This figure also depicts current roadway performance as a measure of Level of Service (LOS). LOS varies from LOS A, defining free flow conditions, to LOS E, defining at-capacity operation, and LOS F, defining delay and operations breakdown. LOS B, C, and D represent shades of these traffic conditions. The figure defines those roads within Erie County operating at LOS D, E, or F, as defined by the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Committee (GBNRTC) and the Regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

4.1.2.1.1 North Campus

The North Campus is located in the southeast portion of the Town of Amherst. The Town of Amherst is the largest suburb of Buffalo, located adjacent to and northeast of the city. Since the 1970s, Amherst has grown rapidly to its current population.

In the early 1900s, Amherst was a rural community with agricultural and sparse residential and commercial development, other than for the Village of Williamsville and other small boroughs. As Amherst has grown, these rural roads have seen complete makeovers to five- and seven-lane suburban arterials. The resulting road network is typical of rapid-growth suburban communities, with heavily traveled commuter roadways, an overabundance of signalized intersections, multiple left and right turn lanes at intersections, numerous intersecting driveways/roadway conflicts, and roads in need of capacity improvements.

[7]EPA Green Book, www.epa.gov & NYSDEC, www.dec.state.ny.us

FIGURE 4.1.2-1

EXISTING ROADWAY PERFORMANCE

This network makes access to the North Campus difficult. Access from Interstate 90 is either via Interchange 50 along Main Street, or via Interchange 49 along Transit Road to either Wehrle Drive or Main Street. Both Main Street and Transit Road are highway capacity improvement projects currently underway by the New York State Department of Transportation. Main Street from Youngs Road to Transit Road is currently under construction, with scheduled completion in early 2005. Transit Road from Interchange 49 to Main Street is currently under design, with construction scheduled for 2006 to 2008. Additionally, the Erie County Department of Public Works is planning an expansion of Wehrle Drive from the Village of Williamsville to Transit Road, scheduled for construction in 2004 and 2005.

When completed, these projects will improve access to the North Campus, but will not completely eliminate travel delays. As the surrounding towns of Lancaster and Clarence continue to grow, traffic on Amherst roads is expected to see continued increases.

Additionally, Interstate 90 (Thruway) continues to see high-level growth on the entire Buffalo corridor stretch. Traffic volumes on the Interstate between Exit 53 (I-190) and Exit 50 (I-290 and Main Street) now exceed 120,000 vehicles per day. These volumes routinely result in traffic in excess of capacity and delays occurring during peak periods. The New York State Thruway Authority is undertaking an assessment of this corridor, to determine future needs for programming purposes. The study is just commencing as of this report.

Between the I-90 Interchange 50 and Interchange 49 (Transit Road), traffic volumes are dramatically lower due to the presence of the Williamsville Toll Barrier between the interchanges. Passenger vehicles using this section of highway are assessed a $0.15 toll, and are also subject to delays at the toll barrier. The Thruway Authority is undertaking an assessment of relocating the toll barrier to a location east of Interchange 49. As of this report date, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement has yet to be released on the project.

4.1.2.1.2 City Campus

As the second largest city in the State of New York, the City of Buffalo has a fully developed road network. Interstate I-190 provides access to the City Campus from the east and north. NY Route 5 (Skyway) provides access from the south. NY Route 33 (Kensington Expressway) provides access from the northeast. A radial city street network terminating downtown provides multiple access venues. Immediately adjacent to the City Campus, Elm Street and Oak Street form a north-south corridor which is signal-interconnected and which carries traffic from the I-190 Interchange N-6 to the commencement of the Kensington Expressway. The Elm-Oak arterial forms the major access corridor to the City Campus.

The radial network of roads forms the basis for transit operation in Buffalo. Buses radiate from downtown locations to outer reaches of the City and the suburbs. This network of buses is balanced between the need to provide for suitable demand and the requirements for cost-effective

operation. The Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) operates the Metro Bus system.

The NFTA also operates the City's Light Rail Rapid Transit (LRRT) system, which runs from downtown at HSBC Arena along Main Street, terminating in northeast Buffalo at the University at Buffalo South Campus. The LRRT can be segmented into the surface section (HSBC Arena to Goodell Street) and the underground sections (Goodell Street to UB South Campus). The surface section is run free of charge, while a fare is charged for underground ridership. From the City Campus, the LRRT is located five blocks to the west and parallel with Elm and Oak Street.

4.1.2.1.3 South Campus

The South Campus is located at the mid portion of the border between the Towns of Orchard Park and Hamburg. Orchard Park and Hamburg are both moderately growing suburban communities. Hamburg was essentially a rural community in the mid 1900s (except for the Village of Hamburg and Blasdell) but saw moderate population increases through the 1990s. The Town today is a mix of light commercial and residential development, with rural areas in existence in the southeast portion of the Town.

Orchard Park was essentially an agricultural town, but the 1970s through the present have seen substantial yet highly planned development. Today, the Town is light industrial/commercial to the north, residential/light commercial in the central town area, and rural/agricultural to the south.

Because both of these communities have experienced moderate growth in a planned way, transportation systems throughout each town are generally suitable. Of significance to ECC South Campus is its proximity to Ralph Wilson Stadium, located adjacent to and east of the campus, which has resulted in high capacity, well-maintained road networks. Campus access is easiest of all three campuses here, with northern access via Route 219, Milestrip Road, Abbott Road, and Southwestern Boulevard (Route 20), with all four lanes at a minimum. From the west, access occurs from I-90 to Camp Road (Route 75) to Southwestern Boulevard to the Campus. From the east or south, Southwestern Boulevard and US Route 20A are collector roads.

Of significance recently was a series of fatal accidents on Southwestern Boulevard from the South Campus to the southwest. This section of four-lane highway has seen steadily increasing traffic. Eleven fatalities in the past three years are mainly the result of head-on collisions where one vehicle had crossed the double yellow median stripe. The New York State Department of Transportation is addressing the problem through an upcoming restriping contract, and an eventual installation of a permanent, two-way, center left turn lane in addition to four travel lanes.

4.1.2.2 Proposed Transportation Projects

The New York State Department of Transportation, New York State Thruway Authority, County of Erie, and City of Buffalo are the owners of the major road network throughout the County. As part of the normal capital program, these agencies carry out projects on a regional basis. Of

interest for this study are projects which have broad-range effects to ECC users, or are local and significant. The following highlights planned activities of this scale:

- Route I-90 from Interchange 50 (at I-290) to Interchange 53 (at I-190): A preliminary study is about to commence which will investigate the need for a fourth lane in each direction on I-90, and evaluate reconfiguring Interchange 50. The study is expected to be complete in 2005.

- NY 33 Corridor Safety Study: This study is assessing ways to improve safety on the Kensington Expressway.

- Peace Bridge: This project seeks to add capacity to the Peace Bridge, through twinning of the existing bridge or through a new bridge. The EIS is currently being formulated for a revised scoped project.

- NY 5 Waterfront Redevelopment: This study, known as the Southtowns Connector, is assessing ways of opening up waterfront by relocating and renovating Route 5 in South Buffalo and Lackawanna.

- Route 219, Springville to Salamanca: This project would construct Route 219 to meet Interstate 86 in Salamanca. It would have an effect of creating an enhanced corridor from the Peace Bridge south to I-86, via I-190 (South Niagara Section), I-90, and Route 219. The EIS is currently awaiting acceptance of a Record of Decision.

- Williamsville Toll Barrier Relocation Study: This project would relocate the Williamsville Toll Barrier on I-90, located between Interchange 50 and Interchange 49 (Transit Road) to the east. The project would provide alternate access opportunities for users of the North Campus. A Draft EIS is currently being prepared.

4.1.2.3 Public Transportation

4.1.2.3.1 Current Conditions, Deficiencies, and Problems

The Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA) owns and operates the Metro Bus and Rail System. This system provides service throughout the Buffalo Metropolitan area, including Erie and Niagara Counties.

Declining usage over the past 40 years has resulted in Metro Bus reducing the number of vehicles in service, to a current count of about 273. This fleet is service-dependent, not capacity-dependent; therefore, routes operate at less than capacity, particularly during non-peak hours.

The Metro Rail, constructed in 1980, serves the Main Street corridor in Buffalo from Downtown to the UB South Campus in the northeast. While needing some rehabilitation and upgrades after 20 years, the system provides suitable service.

4.1.2.3.2 Proposed Public Transportation Projects

The NFTA is currently assessing use of the Memorial Auditorium sports facility (not currently in use) as an Intermodal Transportation Center. This project would serve to enhance auto, bus, light rail, and rail opportunities. The Memorial Auditorium is located at the foot of Main Street, at the terminus of the Metro Rail.

The NFTA has also been assessing the future of Metro Rail. Planned expansions have been discussed for the system, but no formal proposal is currently being developed. Discussions have previously focused on Metro Rail Expansion to Tonawanda, Amherst, Cheektowaga (Airport), and the Southtowns (Lackawanna and Hamburg).

4.1.3 Socioeconomic Conditions

4.1.3.1 Erie County

Erie County is located along the eastern shores of Lake Erie and is bounded by Niagara County to the north, Wyoming County to the east, and Cattaraugus County to the south. During the ten-year time period between 1990 and 2000, Erie County experienced an overall decline in population. The population of 968,532 in 1990 dropped to 950,265 in 2000, a 1.9 percent decrease. This decrease may be a reflection of the significant decline in population of the County's urbanized areas, mainly the City of Buffalo.

TABLE 4.1.3-1
POPULATION CHANGE 1990-2000

	1990 Population	*2000 Population*	*Percent Change*
Erie County	968,532	950,265	-1.9%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau			

Erie County had a total of 415,868 housing units in the year 2000. Of this total, 380,873 were occupied. Approximately 248,767 units were owner-occupied, while the remaining 132,106 occupied units were renter-occupied. The average household size in 2000 was 2.41 persons and the vacancy rate for the County was 8.4 percent.

TABLE 4.1.3-2
HOUSING UNITS & TENURE - 2000

	Total Housing Units	*Occupied Units*	*Vacant Units*	*Owner-Occupied*	*Renter-Occupied*	*Average HH Size (persons)*
Erie County	415,868	380,873	34,995	248,767	132,106	2.41
Source: U.S. Census Bureau						

As depicted in *Table 4.1.3-3 Erie County Population by Age - 2000*, the largest age group in Erie County is the 25-54 age group. Over 42 percent of persons in the County are between the ages of 25 and 54. The 65 and over age group is the second largest, capturing nearly 16 percent of the total population. Approximately 14.1 percent of the population is within the 5-14 age group.

TABLE 4.1.3-3
ERIE COUNTY POPULATION BY AGE – 2000

Age Group	*Percent of Total Population*	*Number of Persons*
Under 5	6.1%	57,837
5-14	14.1%	133,721
15-24	12.8%	121,660
25-54	42.1%	399,728
55-64	9.1%	86,061
65 and over	15.9%	151,258

Median household income for the County in 1999 was $38,567. Census 2000 data shows that 9.2 percent or 22,540 individuals in Erie County are below the national poverty level. While higher than Hamburg (4.5 percent), Amherst (6.4 percent), or Orchard Park (3.2 percent), this figure is substantially lower than the City of Buffalo's (26.6 percent) percent of persons below poverty.

As depicted in *Table 4.1.3-4 Population by Race – 2000*, the White population in Erie County accounted for 82.2 percent of the total population in 2000, with the Black or African American population making up the second largest race category in the County at 13.0 percent. The Asian population accounted for 1.5 percent of the total population, and the Hispanic or Latino population comprised only 3.3 percent of the total County population.

TABLE 4.1.3-4
POPULATION BY RACE – 2000

Race	*Number of People*	*Percent of Total Population*
White	780,942	82.2%
Black or African American	123,539	13.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	5,755	0.6%
Asian	13,835	1.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	223	0.0%
Hispanic or Latino	31,054	3.3%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau – One Race Data		

Regarding levels of education attainment in Erie County, for persons age 25 and over, 34.0 percent have an Associate, Bachelor's, Graduate, or other professional degree. Approximately 29.9 percent of persons in Erie County have a high school diploma, while 5.2 percent have a less than 9th grade education.

4.1.3.2 Community Socioeconomic Profiles

4.1.3.2.1 City of Buffalo

The City of Buffalo is located on the eastern shores of Lake Erie, in Erie County. As depicted in *Table 4.1.3-5 Population Change 1990-2000*, over the past 10 years, the City has dropped from 328,123 in 1990 to 292,648 in 2000, a 10.8 percent decline. The declining population is likely the result of outward migration to the suburbs, among other factors.

TABLE 4.1.3-5
POPULATION CHANGE 1990-2000

	1990 Population	*2000 Population*	*Percent Change*
City of Buffalo	328,123	292,648	-10.8%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau			

Table 4.1.3-6 Buffalo Population by Age – 2000, demonstrates that the largest age group in Buffalo is the 25 to 54 age group, representing over 41 percent of the City's total population. The next largest age groups are the 15-24 group with 15.4 percent of the total population, and the 5-14 age group with 15.1 percent of the population. Persons age 65 and over account for 13.4 percent of the total population. Persons under the age of five account for the smallest portion of the population at 7.1 percent.

TABLE 4.1.3-6
BUFFALO POPULATION BY AGE – 2000

Age Group	*Percent of Total Population*	*Number of Persons*
Under 5	7.1%	20,768
5-14	15.1%	44,239
15-24	15.4%	44,979
25-54	41.3%	120,988
55-64	7.6%	22,347
65 and Over	13.4%	39,327

In 2000, there were a total of 145,574 housing units within the City of Buffalo. As shown below in *Table 4.1.3-7 Housing Units and Occupancy*, of this total, 122,720 were occupied, creating a high 15.7 percent vacancy rate. Owner-occupied units accounted for 53,323 units, while the remaining 69,397 occupied units were renter-occupied units. In addition, the average household size in 2000 was 2.29 persons.

TABLE 4.1.3-7 HOUSING UNITS & OCCUPANCY - 2000						
	Total Housing Units	***Occupied Units***	***Vacant Units***	***Owner-Occupied***	***Renter-Occupied***	***Average HH Size (persons)***
City of Buffalo	145,574	122,720	22,854	53,323	69,397	2.29
Source: U.S. Census Bureau						

Median household income for the City of Buffalo in 1999 was $24,536. According to Census 2000 data, more than a quarter, or 26.6 percent of all individuals in the City were below the national poverty level at that time, a significant percentage of the population. This figure is an indication of the current economic state of City residents, and can be partly attributed to the mass outward migration of middle and upper income families to the suburbs.

According to Census 2000 data and as depicted below in *Table 4.1.3-8 Population by Race*, 54.4 percent of the total population in the City is White, with a significant portion of the remaining population, 37.2 percent, being Black or African American. The Asian population accounts for 1.4 percent of the total population, while the Hispanic or Latino population made up 7.5 percent of Buffalo's total population.

TABLE 4.1.3-8 POPULATION BY RACE – 2000		
Race	***Number of People***	***Percent of Total Population***
White	159,300	54.4%
Black or African American	108,951	37.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native	2,250	0.8%
Asian	4,093	1.4%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	120	0.0%
Hispanic or Latino	22,076	7.5%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau - One Race data		

Of persons age 25 and over in the City, a significant percentage (29.1 percent) have a high school diploma or equivalency. Nearly 26 percent of persons have an Associate, Bachelor's, Graduate, or other professional degree, while approximately 8.0 percent have less than a 9th grade education.

4.1.3.2.2 Town of Amherst

The Town of Amherst is located northeast of the City of Buffalo, between the Towns of Tonawanda and Clarence. Amherst has experienced a 4.3 percent increase in population between 1990 and 2000. As depicted below in *Table 4.1.3-9 Population Change,* the population grew from

111,711 in 1990 to 116,510 in 2000. This represents a relatively moderate rate of growth over the ten-year period.

TABLE 4.1.3-9
POPULATION CHANGE 1990-2000

	1990 Population	*2000 Population*	*Percent Change*
Town of Amherst	111,711	116,510	4.3%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau			

As depicted below in *Table 4.1.3-10 Amherst Population by Age,* the largest age group in Amherst is the 25-54 group, with 40 percent of the total population, similar to the City of Buffalo figures. The 65 and over age group is the second largest, capturing over 17 percent of the total population. Approximately 14.7 percent of the population is in the 5-14 age group, and the under 5 group accounted for 5.4 percent of the population.

TABLE 4.1.3-10
AMHERST POPULATION BY AGE – 2000

Age Group	*Percent of Total Population*	*Number of Persons*
Under 5	5.4%	6,270
5-14	12.9%	15,071
15-24	14.7%	17,112
25-54	40.0%	46,598
55-64	9.3%	10,870
65 and Over	17.7%	20,589

According to the 2000 data as depicted below in *Table 4.1.3-11 Housing Units and Occupancy*, Amherst had a total of 46,803 housing units, with approximately 45,076 of the units occupied, and 1,727 vacant. The Town had a relatively low vacancy rate at 3.7 percent. Owner-occupied units accounted for 33,349 units, while the remaining 11,727 occupied units are renter-occupied units. In addition, according to the 2000 data, the average household size was 2.42 persons.

TABLE 4.1.3-11
HOUSING UNITS & OCCUPANCY - 2000

	Total Housing Units	*Occupied Units*	*Vacant Units*	*Owner-Occupied*	*Renter-Occupied*	*Average HH Size (persons)*
Town of Amherst	46,803	45,076	1,727	33,349	11,727	2.42
Source: U.S. Census Bureau						

The median household income in Amherst was $55,427 in the year 1999. Census 2000 data shows that 6.4 percent of the Town's population, or 7,015 individuals in Amherst were below the national poverty level. This figure was significantly lower than the percentage of persons below the poverty level in the City of Buffalo.

According to Census 2000 data and figures, and as depicted below in *Table 4.1.3-12 Population by Race – 2000*, 89.3 percent of the total population in Amherst was White, with the second largest race group being Asian, at 5.2 percent of the total population. The Hispanic or Latino population comprised 1.4 percent of the total Town population, while the Black or African American population comprised 3.9 percent.

TABLE 4.1.3-12
POPULATION BY RACE – 2000

Race	*Number of People*	*Percent of Total Population*
White	104,018	89.3%
Black or African American	4,544	3.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native	146	0.1%
Asian	6,079	5.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	29	0.0%
Hispanic or Latino	1,579	1.4%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau – One Race Data		

Amherst residents were highly educated in 2000, with 55.9 percent of persons age 25 and over possessing an Associate, Bachelor's, Graduate, or other professional degree. Approximately 18.7 percent of persons had a high school diploma and 17.3 percent have received some college, but did not have a degree. Only 2.8 percent had less than a 9th grade education.

4.1.3.2.3 Town of Hamburg

The Town of Hamburg is located in central Erie County along the eastern shores of Lake Erie, directly south of the cities of Lackawanna and Buffalo. The Town is the largest in area of Erie County's twenty-five Towns, encompassing an area of approximately 42 square miles.

Hamburg had a population of 56,259, according to the 2000 Census. Two incorporated Villages were included in the total Town population figures: the Village of Blasdell and the Village of Hamburg. The Village of Blasdell is located in the northern part of the Town and had a 2000 population of 2,524. The Village of Hamburg is located in the southern part of the Town and had a 2000 population of 10,116. Below, *Table 4.1.3-13 Population Change 1990-2000* illustrates a comparison of 1990 and 2000 population in the Town.

TABLE 4.1.3-13
POPULATION CHANGE 1990-2000

	1990 Population	*2000 Population*	*Percent Change*
Town of Hamburg	53,735	56,259	4.7%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau			

As depicted in *Table 4.1.3-14 Hamburg Population by Age – 2000*, current figures based upon Town and Census 2000 data show an increase in the senior population during the 1990 to 2000 period and now place the senior population (age 55 and over) as high as 24.6 percent of the Town's total population. Individuals aged 25-54 represented a significant portion of the total population, capturing 43.8 percent. These numbers continue to point toward an increasing senior population within the Town over the next several decades. The extremely high and ever-growing senior population may require a need for many additional services, including subsidized housing, nursing care, day care, fitness, and other supportive services for the senior population.

TABLE 4.1.3-14
HAMBURG POPULATION BY AGE – 2000

Age Group	*Percent of Total Population*	*Number of Persons*
Under 5	6.0%	3,367
5-14	14.4%	8,084
15-24	11.3%	6,367
25-54	43.8%	24,619
55-64	9.5%	5,335
65 and over	15.1%	8,487

The Town's median household size had been decreasing steadily, reflecting a trend toward smaller families. The median household size in 2000 was 2.51.

As depicted below in *Table 4.1.3-15 Housing Units and Occupancy*, Hamburg contained a total of 22,833 housing units, including the units in the Villages of Blasdell and Hamburg. Of this figure, 21,999 units were occupied, creating a 3.4 percent vacancy rate. As depicted in *Table 4.1.3-15* below, renter households make up about one-quarter of Hamburg's occupied housing, 25.8 percent, with 5,679 units. This compares to the national figures of approximately 35 percent rental-occupied and 65 percent owner-occupied.

TABLE 4.1.3-15
HOUSING UNITS & TENURE – 2000

	Total Housing Units	*Occupied Units*	*Vacant Units*	*Owner-Occupied*	*Renter-Occupied*	*Average HH Size (persons)*
Town of Hamburg	22,833	21,999	834	16,230	5,679	2.51
Source: U.S. Census Bureau						

Median household income in 1999 was $47,888, and the Census 2000 data showed that 4.5 percent of individuals in the Town of Hamburg are below the national poverty level. This demonstrates a relatively moderate percentage of persons below the poverty level.

As shown below in *Table 4.1.3-16 Population by Race – 2000*, the Town's racial structure was predominately White. According to Census 2000 data and figures, the Town's White population is 97.9 percent of the total population. However, the Non-White population had increased to 2.1 percent of the total population. The Hispanic or Latino population comprised 1.6 percent of the total Town population, while the Black or African American population comprised only 0.5 percent of the total Town population.

TABLE 4.1.3-16
POPULATION BY RACE – 2000

Race	*Number of People*	*Percent of Total Population*
White	55,096	97.9
Black or African American	277	0.5
American Indian and Alaska Native	115	0.2
Asian	217	0.4
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	5	0.0
Hispanic or Latino	876	1.6
Source: U.S. Census Bureau		

Hamburg residents were highly educated in 2000. Of persons age 25 and over, 36.9 percent had an Associate, Bachelor's, Graduate, or other professional degree. Over 30 percent of persons had a high school diploma or equivalency, and approximately 4 percent had a less than 9th grade education.

4.1.3.2.4 Town of Orchard Park

Orchard Park is located directly east of the Town of Hamburg in central Erie County. As depicted below in *Table 4.1.3-17 Population Changes 1990-2000*, over the past 10 years, the Town of Orchard Park has experienced increased population growth. Between 1990 and 2000, the Town's population grew from 24,632 to 27,637, a 12.2 percent increase. This is the largest increase in population over the past decade among communities hosting an ECC Campus.

TABLE 4.1.3-17
POPULATION CHANGE 1990-2000

	1990 Population	*2000 Population*	*Percent Change*
Town of Orchard Park	24,632	27,637	12.2%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau			

The Orchard Park population was distributed among age groups in a manner similar to the Town of Hamburg. As depicted below in *Table 4.1.3-18 Orchard Park Population by Age - 2000*, the largest age group in Orchard Park was the 25 to 54 age group, with over 41 percent of the total population. The 65 and over age group was the second largest, capturing nearly 17 percent of the total population. As with the Town of Hamburg, the increasing senior population may eventually

increase the need for related services. Approximately 15.2 percent of the population was in the 5-14 age group.

TABLE 4.1.3-18
ORCHARD PARK POPULATION BY AGE – 2000

Age Group	*Percent of Total Population*	*Number of Persons*
Under 5	5.5%	1,509
5-14	15.2%	4,188
15-24	10.3%	2,860
25-54	41.7%	11,532
55-64	10.7%	2,950
65 and over	16.6%	4,598

As shown in *Table 4.1.3-19 Housing Units & Occupancy*, there were a total of 10,644 housing units within the Town of Orchard Park according to the 2000 Census data. Of this total, 10,277 were occupied, creating a low 3.4 percent vacancy rate. Owner-occupied units accounted for 8,083 units, while the remaining 2,194 occupied units were renter-occupied units. In addition, the average household size in 2000 was 2.62 persons.

TABLE 4.1.3-19
HOUSING UNITS & OCCUPANCY - 2000

	Total Housing Units	*Occupied Units*	*Vacant Units*	*Owner-Occupied*	*Renter-Occupied*	*Average HH Size (persons)*
Town of Orchard Park	10,644	10,277	367	8,083	2,194	2.62
Source: U.S. Census Bureau						

Median household income for Orchard Park in 1999 was $59,762. Census 2000 data shows that 3.2 percent (876 individuals) of individuals in the Town of Hamburg are below the national poverty level. This demonstrates a relatively moderate percentage of persons below the poverty level, and is the lowest percentage when compared to the three other ECC host communities.

According to Census 2000 data and depicted below in *Table 4.1.3-20 Population by Race*, Orchard Park's White population was 97.6 percent of the total population. The Asian population accounted for 1.1 percent of the total population. The Hispanic or Latino population comprised 1.0 percent of the total Town population, while the Black or African American population comprised 0.5 percent of the total Town population.

TABLE 4.1.3-20 POPULATION BY RACE – 2000		
Race	***Number of People***	***Percent of Total Population***
White	26,965	97.6
Black or African American	133	0.5
American Indian and Alaska Native	41	0.1
Asian	292	1.1
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	6	0.0
Hispanic or Latino	265	1.0
Source: U.S. Census Bureau – One Race Data		

Orchard Park residents were also highly educated in the year 2000. Of persons age 25 and over, 50.3 percent had an Associate, Bachelor's, Graduate, or professional degree. Nearly 23 percent of persons had a high school diploma. A low 3.4 percent had a less than 9th grade education.

4.1.3.2.5 Socioeconomic Comparison

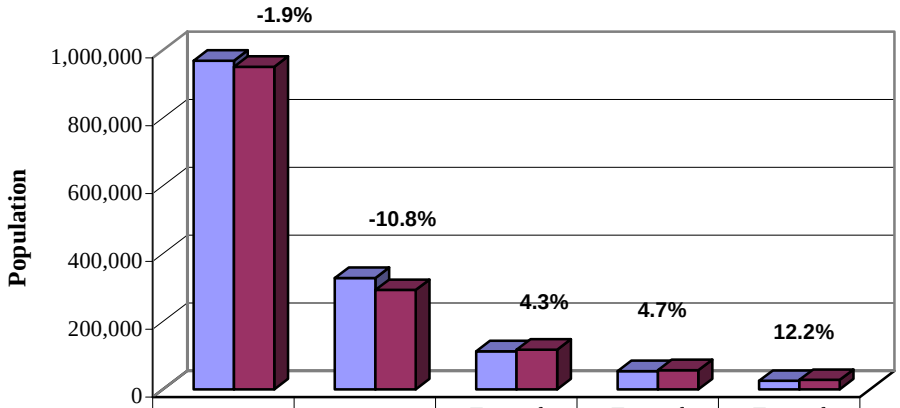
The following is a comparison of demographics for each community that is home to an ECC Campus, as well as for Erie County. This discussion is an examination of current conditions and is a critical component to the GEIS. Understanding the current conditions and trends in a community is critical in properly planning for its future and the future of educational facilities, such as ECC, in the community.

Population

The region surrounding ECC experienced both population growth and decline during the time period between 1990 and 2000. The Towns of Amherst, Hamburg, and Orchard Park have each experienced population growth ranging from 4.3 percent to 12.2 percent. As a result of growth in these neighboring communities, the City of Buffalo experienced a significant 10.8 percent decline in population. Erie County also decreased in population during the ten-year time period by nearly 2 percent.

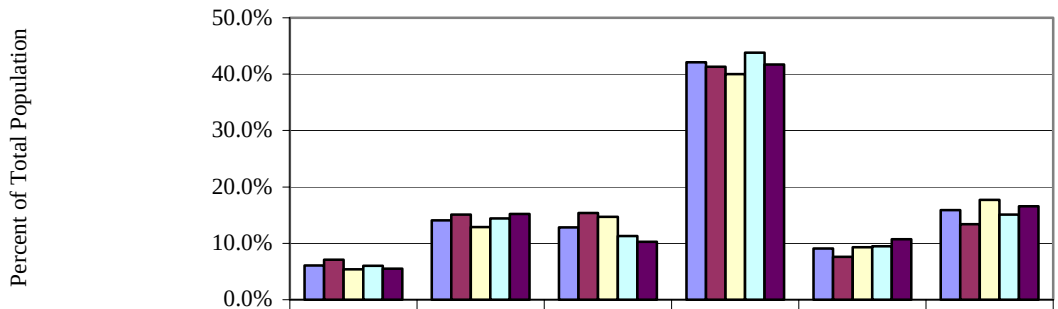
Orchard Park experienced the most significant change between 1990 and 2000 with a population increase of 12.2 percent. The Towns of Hamburg and Amherst experienced 4.7 percent and 4.3 percent increases, respectively. Below, *Figure 4.1.3-1 Population Change Comparison*, further illustrates the population change, by geographic area, between 1990 and 2000.

Figure 4.1.3-1
Population Change Comparison 1990-2000



	Erie County	City of Buffalo	Town of Amherst	Town of Hamburg	Town of Orchard Park
1990	968,532	328,123	111,711	53,735	24,632
2000	950,265	292,648	116,510	56,259	27,637

Figure 4.1.3-2
Population by Age Comparison - 2000



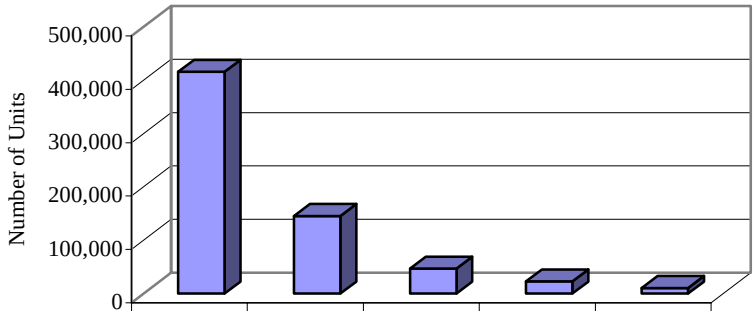
	Under 5	5-14	15-24	25-54	55-64	65+
Erie County	6.1%	14.1%	12.8%	42.1%	9.1%	15.9%
City of Buffalo	7.1%	15.1%	15.4%	41.3%	7.6%	13.4%
Town of Amherst	5.4%	12.9%	14.7%	40.0%	9.3%	17.7%
Town of Hamburg	6.0%	14.4%	11.3%	43.8%	9.5%	15.1%
Town of Orchard Park	5.5%	15.2%	10.3%	41.7%	10.7%	16.6%

The distribution of population by age is relatively consistent among each geographic area. Below, *Figure 4.1.3-2 Population by Age Comparison* illustrates the breakdown of population by age group. The 25-54 age group captured 40.0 to 43.8 percent of the total population in each community as well as in the County. Overall, the 65 and over age group contained the next largest percentage of the population in each geographic area, while the under 5 group accounted for the smallest percentage of the population in 2000.

Housing

The total number of housing units for each geographic region is illustrated below in *Figure 4.1.3-3 Total Housing Units*. In 2000, Erie County had a total of 415,868 housing units and an average household size of 2.41 persons. The City of Buffalo had 145,574 housing units and an average household size of 2.29. In comparison, the Town of Amherst, with 46,803 housing units, had an average of 2.42 persons per household. The Town of Hamburg had 22,833 housing units and an average of 2.51 persons per household, while the Town of Orchard Park had an average household size of 2.62 with 27,637 housing units.

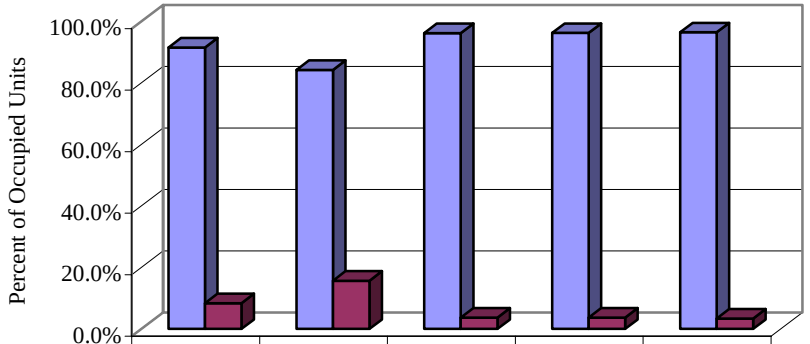
Figure 4.1.3-3
Total Housing Units - 2000



	Erie County	City of Buffalo	Town of Amherst	Town of Hamburg	Town of Orchard
Total Units	415,868	145,574	46,803	22,833	10,644

As depicted below in *Figure 4.1.3-4 Housing Occupancy Comparison*, the Town of Orchard Park had the highest percentage of total occupied housing units of the areas studied with 96.6 percent of total units occupied in 2000. In the Towns of Hamburg and Amherst, 96.3 percent of the total housing units were occupied. Erie County had approximately 92 percent of its housing units occupied. The City of Buffalo had the lowest percentage of occupied housing units of each geographic area, with 84.3 percent. As a result, the City of Buffalo had a significantly high vacancy rate of 15.7 percent and Orchard Park had a low vacancy rate of 3.4 percent. The City's high vacancy rate is consistent with the dramatic decline in population and, therefore, in housing demand in the past ten years. Conversely, Orchard Park's low vacancy rate is an indication of its population growth and a higher demand for housing.

Figure 4.1.3-4
Housing Occupancy Comparison Table - 2000

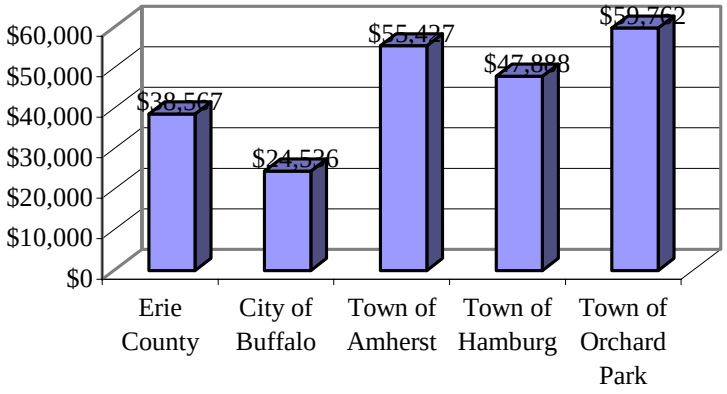


	Erie County	City of Buffalo	Town of Amherst	Town of Hamburg	Town of Orchard
% of Total Occupied	91.6%	84.3%	96.3%	96.3%	96.6%
Vacancy Rate	8.4%	15.7%	3.7%	3.7%	3.4%

Income

The 2000 Census calculated median household income using 1999 data. As depicted below in *Figure 4.1.3-5 Median Housing Income - 2000*, the Town of Orchard Park had, by far, the highest median household income (MHI) of the areas studied. With an MHI of $59,762, Orchard Park had an MHI nearly 2½ times higher than Buffalo's MHI of $24,536 and 1½ times higher than Erie County's MHI of $38,567. The Towns of Hamburg and Amherst each had MHI's closer to Orchard Park's. Hamburg had an MHI of $47,888, while Amherst had an MHI of $55,427.

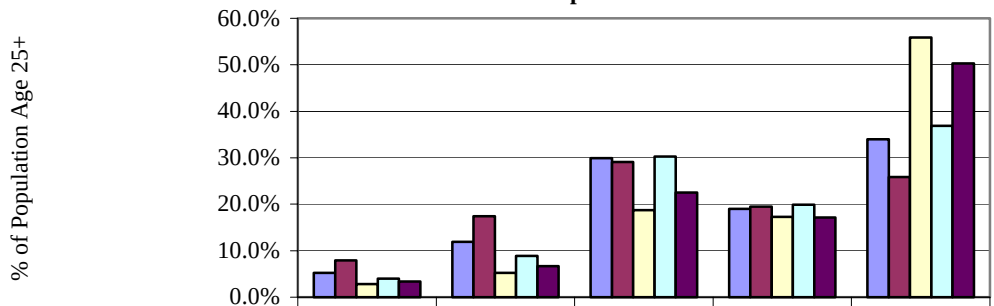
Figure 4.1.3-5
Median Household Income - 1999



Education

Educational attainment was also examined for each area, and is graphically depicted below in *Figure 4.1.3-6 Educational Attainment Comparison - 2000*. With the exception of the City of Buffalo, at least 34 percent of persons in each area had a college degree. College graduates for the purposes of this analysis include persons with an Associate, Bachelor's, Graduate, or professional degree. Twenty-five percent of persons age 25 and over in Buffalo were college graduates. The percentage of persons without at least a high school diploma was low across all geographic areas.

Figure 4.1.3-6
Educational Attainment Comparison - 2000



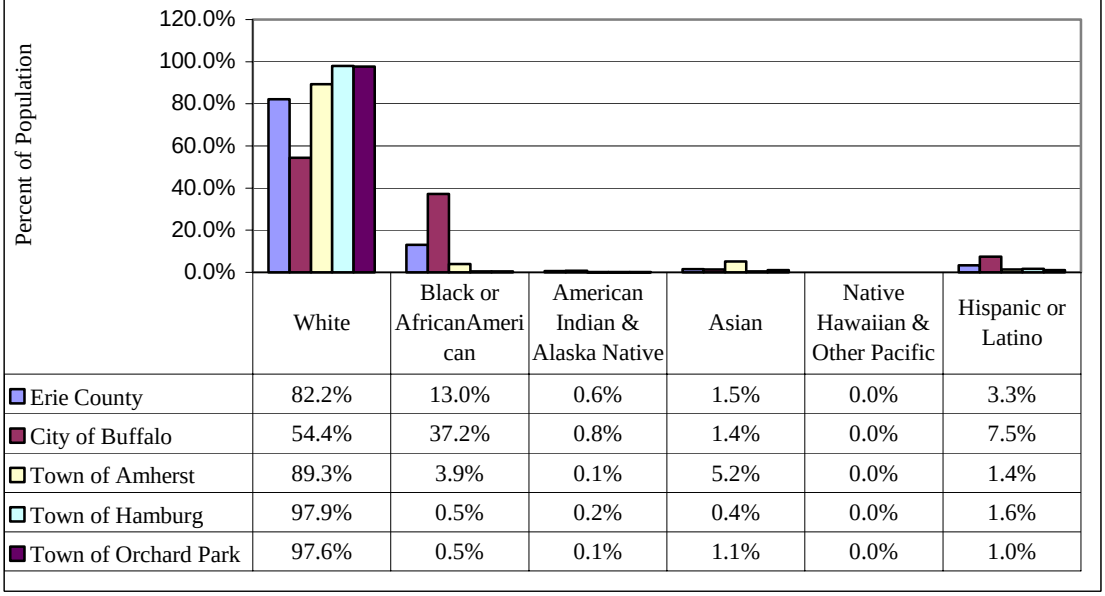
	Less than 9th	9-12th No diploma	High School Graduate	Some College	College Graduate*
Erie County	5.2%	11.9%	29.9%	19.0%	34.0%
City of Buffalo	7.9%	17.4%	29.1%	19.5%	25.9%
Town of Amherst	2.8%	5.2%	18.7%	17.3%	55.9%
Town of Hamburg	4.0%	8.9%	30.3%	19.9%	36.9%
Town of Orchard Park	3.4%	6.7%	22.5%	17.1%	50.3%

Race

As shown below in *Figure 4.1.3-7 Race Comparison*, racial minorities accounted for a small percentage of the population in the Towns of Amherst, Hamburg, and Orchard Park for the year 2000. The Town of Hamburg and the Town of Orchard Park each had an overwhelmingly homogenous population with 97.9 percent and 97.6 percent of their populations, respectively, being White. Less than 1 percent of the population for each town was Black or African American and less than 2 percent of each population was Hispanic or Latino. A significant portion, 89.3 percent, of the Town of Amherst's population was also White. Amherst had an Asian population accounting for approximately 5.2 percent of its population and 3.9 percent of its population was Black or African American. Over 82 percent of Erie County's population was White, while 13 percent was Black or African American.

In contrast, the City of Buffalo demonstrated a much higher percentage of racial minorities. Approximately 54.4 percent of the City's population was White, while 37.2 percent of its population was Black or African American. In addition, 7.5 percent of the City's population was Hispanic or Latino.

Figure 4.1.3-7
Race Comparison



	White	Black or AfricanAmerican	American Indian & Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific	Hispanic or Latino
Erie County	82.2%	13.0%	0.6%	1.5%	0.0%	3.3%
City of Buffalo	54.4%	37.2%	0.8%	1.4%	0.0%	7.5%
Town of Amherst	89.3%	3.9%	0.1%	5.2%	0.0%	1.4%
Town of Hamburg	97.9%	0.5%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%	1.6%
Town of Orchard Park	97.6%	0.5%	0.1%	1.1%	0.0%	1.0%

4.2 North Campus

4.2.1 Geology

4.2.1.1 Subsurface

The Campus and the Town of Amherst lies within the Erie-Ontario Lake Plain physiographic province, an area characterized by sedimentary rock that was deposited over 400 million years ago when the area was part of a shallow inland sea. Bedrock within the Town occurs in bands running east to west. The Salina Group makes up the majority of the bedrock formations in the Town north of the Onondaga Escarpment.[8] The depth to bedrock varies across soil types, but ranges from 10-40 feet. The bedrock hardness class is hard across all soil types, which requires blasting or special equipment for excavation when encountered during construction.

[8] Town of Amherst Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan – Draft Inventory and Analysis Report. Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC., URS Corporation, and Economics Research Associates. May 24, 2001.

FIGURE 4.2.1-1

SOILS – NORTH CAMPUS

4.2.1.2 Surface

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and as depicted on *Figure 4.2.1-1 Soils – North Campus*, soils on the existing North Campus are predominantly Wassaic Silt Loam (WaA). A narrow band of Newstead Gravelly Loam (Ne) and Farmington Channery Loam (FaB) are present in the central part of the Campus. The northwest corner of the North Campus contains Farmington Channery Loam (FaA). The Wassaic soils are typically found on uplands and are underlain by limestone bedrock. WaA soils typically have a 0-3 percent slope and are Prime Farmland Soils. This type of soil has moderate frost action. WaA soils are not hydric.

Ne soils also have a 0-3 percent slope and are not considered Prime Farmland Soils. Ne soils are highly reactive to frost action and are somewhat poorly drained. These soils commonly have a layer with low hydraulic conductivity and a wet state high in profile. Ne soils are not hydric soils.

FaB soils have a 3-8 percent slope. These soils react to moderate frost action. FaB soils typically have a slow infiltration rate and are not hydric soils. In addition, FaB soils are not Prime Farmland Soils. FaA soils are present in areas with a 0-3 percent slope and have similar characteristics to the FaB soils.

Outside of the existing boundaries of the North Campus, but within the area identified as a potential pubic-private partnership opportunity, a variety of additional soil types are present including Ovid Silt Loam (OvA), Cazenovia Silt Loam (CgB), Bensen Rock Outcrop (BhB), Ilion Silt Loam (In), Bensen Very Channery Loam (BfA), Dumps (Dp), Churchville Silt Loam (CoA), Lakemont Silt Loam (La), and Wassiac Silt Loam (WaB).

4.2.1.3 Topography

Generally, the topography of the North Campus and the surrounding area is flat, giving an expansive character to this part of Buffalo's suburbia. Elevations across the Town of Amherst range from 575 feet to 710 feet above sea level. Little significant topography is evident on the Campus.[9]

4.2.2 Water Resources

4.2.2.1 Groundwater

It is expected that groundwater conditions will vary with location, changes in soil or rock conditions, and seasonal fluctuations in precipitation and runoff. The North Campus site primarily contains three soil types—WaA, Ne, and FaB. The water table depth is 2-3 feet for the area with WaA soils. WaA is in Hydrology Class B, which has moderate filtration rates and is deep or moderately deep. In addition, Hydrology Class B contains moderately well- to well-drained soils with moderately coarse textures. For Ne soils, the depth to the water table is 0.5-1.0 feet. Ne and FaB soils are in Hydrology Class C. Class C has slow infiltration rates and typically contains soils

[9] id 7 at 4-1

with layers impeding downward movement of water, or soils with moderately fine or fine textures. FaB Soils have an intermediate water-holding capacity with a depth to water table of more than 6 feet.

4.2.2.2 Surface Water

As depicted in *Figure 4.2.2-1 Hydrologic Features – North Campus*, no surface waters are present on the North Campus. Ellicott Creek is a Class B water located approximately 3,000 feet (0.6 miles) southwest of the campus. Class B waters are suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation and fishing as well as fish propagation and survival. The Creek is designated

FIGURE 4.2.2-1

HYDROLOGIC FEATURES – NORTH CAMPUS

as a waterway with Countywide significance by Erie County. A designation such as this is determined by the waterway's ability to "serve as the primary water-course within one of the 13 major subdrainage basins located in Erie County."

The majority of the Town of Amherst falls within the Ellicott Creek watershed, one of three watersheds in the Town. Ellicott Creek is a tributary to the Tonawanda Creek and flows northwest near the Village of Williamsville to the Town's western boundary near Ellicott Creek Road and South Ellicott Creek Road. Ellicott Creek is the Town of Amherst's primary drainage basin.[10]

Ellicott Creek is on a NYSDEC Priority Waterbodies List and is classified as a Stressed waterbody. This classification indicates a waterbody within which uses are not significantly limited, but occasional quality, quantity, or conditions related to degradation of habitat can discourage its use. It is believed the Stressed designation is the result of hydrologic modifications.[11]

In reaction to concern over water quality in Ellicott Creek, the Ellicott Creek Improvement Project was initiated in 1998 by the Erie-Niagara Basin Regional Water Resources Planning Board and the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning. This comprehensive watershed study recommended a watershed-based approach to maintaining and restoring environmental resources. Also included in the recommendations were techniques for managing land use and flooding. The results have been positive, with generally improved water quality and increased public awareness.[12]

Floodplain

Major floods in the Town of Amherst are often the result of precipitation or snowmelt and occur in late winter and early spring. The Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) defines floodplains and uses the 100-year floodplain as a benchmark to create standards for the National Flood Insurance Program. The 100-year floodplain is the area flooded in a flood that would have a 1 percent chance of occurring in any given year.[13]

As depicted above on *Figure 4.2.2-1 Hydrologic Features – North Campus,* the existing North Campus is not located within a floodplain. However, the area identified as a potential public-private partnership is partially located within a 500-year floodplain. The floodplain boundary is southwest of the Campus and extends north to Wehrle Drive, below Lawrence Bell Drive to the south and west past the intersection of Earhart Drive and Lawrence Bell Drive. Areas south of the Campus near Ellicott Creek are within a 100-year floodplain.

[10] id 7 at 4-4
[11] id
[12] id 7 at 4-5
[13] id

Storm Water

The Town of Amherst currently has an extensive storm water management system in place that can effectively handle storm water runoff. The system includes underground storm sewer pipes, retention ponds, ditches, and dry wells. There are nearly 23 outfalls greater than 36 inches that discharge mainly into Ellicott Creek and Tonawanda Creek. The Town anticipates the development of a stringent storm water management program in the near future in response to the new Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Phase II storm water regulations.[14] Currently, the Town has completed approximately 50 percent of a new storm water management plan pursuant to the Phase II regulations. The management plan is being developed in coordination with Erie County.

Currently, storm water from the North Campus drains partially into the municipal system and partially into the recreation fields and surrounding open areas on the Campus. No significant problems with the current storm water system were identified during a site visit in the spring of 2003.

4.2.2.3 Wetlands

Wetlands are generally defined as areas covered with shallow water permanently or for periods long enough to support aquatic or semi-aquatic vegetation. Areas designated as wetlands may include bogs, swamps, marshes, wet meadows, floodplains, and water-logged (hydric) soils. Wetlands serve many important functions including: providing habitat for wildlife and plants, playing a role in storm water management and flood control, filtering pollutants, recharging groundwater, and providing passive recreational and educational opportunities.

Federal policy regarding wetlands is that there shall be no net loss. Under the most recent federal rules, which took effect in the fall of 2000, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers regulates any disturbance of 1/10 of an acre or more of wetlands. If the disturbance is between 1/10 and ½ of an acre, the Army Corps must be notified. If the disturbance is more than ½ acre, an individual permit must be obtained from the Army Corps. Federally regulated wetlands, because they are not mapped as such, can be difficult to identify. Hydric soils are a strong indicator of the presence of wetlands. New York State, through the Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), generally regulates all wetlands that are 12.4 acres or more.

There are no wetlands present on the existing North Campus or in the area identified for potential public-private partnerships. However, as depicted on *Figure 4.2.2-1 Hydrologic Features – North Campus,* wetlands are present in the area southeast of the campus. A small NYSDEC wetland is located within approximately 1,500 feet (~0.3 miles) southeast of the campus. A wetland identified in the National Wetlands Inventory is located approximately 2,600 feet (~0.5 miles) east of the Campus.

[14] id 7 at 8-3

4.2.3 Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecology

4.2.3.1 Vegetation

The majority of the North Campus consists of open-maintained lawn and recreational fields with a mix of coniferous and deciduous trees lining the parking lots along the western portion of the campus, interior driveways, parking areas, and sidewalks. A dense mix of coniferous and deciduous vegetation exists to the east of the Campus, separating the Campus from a neighborhood of multi-family dwellings.

4.2.3.2 Fish and Wildlife

Terrestrial Resources

The North Campus is set within a dense suburban section of Amherst, and possesses terrestrial species common to suburban areas.

Aquatic Resources

There are no surface-water features on the North Campus.

4.2.3.3 Threatened and Endangered Species

Pursuant to a letter dated July 3, 2003, from the NYSDEC New York Natural Heritage Program, there are no records of known occurrences of rare or State-listed animals and plants, significant natural communities, or significant habitats, on or in the immediate vicinity of the North Campus (*DGEIS Appendix B Correspondences* – Betty A. Ketcham, Information Services, NY Natural Heritage Program, 7-3-03).

4.2.3.4 Critical Environmental Areas

There are currently no critical environmental areas on or near the North Campus. According to the NYSDEC, local agencies may designate geographic areas within their boundaries as "Critical Environmental Areas" (CEAs). State agencies may also designate geographic areas they own, manage, or regulate. A designated CEA must have a unique character relating to a natural setting; a benefit or threat to human health; or agricultural, social, cultural, historic, archaeological, or recreational values.[15]

4.2.4 Land Use, Zoning, and Community Character

4.2.4.1 Surrounding Land Uses

The Town of Amherst surrounds the ECC North Campus. Amherst is characterized by a blend of land uses. Commercial activities appear along Main Street at many of the busy intersections. Other land uses, primarily residential and institutional, occur along rectilinear road patterns. Generally, the topography is flat giving an expansive character to this part of Buffalo's suburbia. Development is decidedly horizontal, expressing a feeling of expansiveness.

[15] Critical Environmental Areas, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation www.dec.state.ny.us

As depicted in *Figure 4.2.4-1 Land Use – North Campus*, no residential uses directly abut the North Campus. The multi-family neighborhood to the east is sufficiently buffered from the Campus by a 350± foot-wide wood lot. All remaining uses that abut or are directly across the roads are commercial, office, industrial, and manufacturing.

FIGURE 4.2.4-1

LAND USE – NORTH CAMPUS

Ornamental plantings dot commercial, residential, and institutional developments throughout the Town, while scattered, undeveloped vegetated parcels complete a patchwork typical of other suburban parts of Erie County. With limited exceptions along Youngs Road, the landscape and associated structures are generally well-maintained. Overhead electric and phone distribution lines parallel most primary roads.

4.2.4.2 Existing Zoning/Permitted Uses/Density for Campus and Surrounding Areas

North Campus

As depicted on *Figure 4.2.4-2 Zoning – North Campus*, the North Campus is currently zoned Community Facilities (CF) District on the Town of Amherst Zoning Map. According to §203-4.1 of the Code of the Town of Amherst, the intent of the CF District is "to provide a special zoning classification for public and semipublic facilities, including governmental, religious, educational, protective, and other civic facilities in order to insure the proper location of such facilities in relation to transportation and other land uses within the Town, compatibility of such facilities with adjacent development, and proper site design and land development."

Colleges, universities, technical schools, and several other public and semi-public uses are listed as permitted uses within CF Districts.

The density of the development in the CF District is guided by conformance to yard, off-street parking, loading and stacking, and landscaping requirements.

Due to the fact that ECC is operated by Erie County, the County is exempt from complying with the Town of Amherst zoning regulations.

Surrounding Areas

Referring to *Figure 4.2.4-2 Zoning – North Campus*, the Campus is surrounded by multi-family dwelling, manufacturing, office parks, research and development, residential, and mixed commercial zoning districts.

4.2.4.3 Aesthetics

The aesthetics of the North Campus are consistent with the surrounding area, with low profile buildings and open maintained suburban-style lawns. The Campus is visible from the north, south, and western sides, with only a small portion visible from the northeast. Residents do have a view to the Campus from the north and northwest over the recreational fields. The Campus does have a large radio tower that is visible from a significant distance off campus.

FIGURE 4.2.4-2

ZONING – NORTH CAMPUS

4.2.4.4 Noise

Noise impacts in the Town of Amherst are regulated under §138 of the Town Code. Current sources of noise from the Campus include automobiles and the occasional noise generated from recreational and sports activities taking place in the northern section of the Campus. According to the Town of Amherst, there have been no violations of the noise ordinance on the North Campus.

4.2.4.5 Lighting

Light impacts in the Town of Amherst are regulated under §132 of the Town Code. An array of lighting illuminates the Campus at required locations. There are no lights illuminating the recreational fields. The current lighting patterns do not result in any adverse impacts to adjoining properties. The general lighting of the Campus, street lights, and light sources from surrounding uses are the major sources of ambient light in the area.

4.2.4.6 Community Recreational Facilities

Immediately south of the Campus, south of Wehrle Drive, exists the Wehrle FAA Recreation Area with four baseball diamonds and additional recreational amenities. The College Park recreational area is located west of the North Campus across Youngs Road. These are the only two recreational areas in the immediate vicinity of the North Campus.

4.2.5 Existing Planning Initiatives and Land Use Plans

The Town of Amherst is currently developing a Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan. Like Erie Community College, the Town is using SEQR and a GEIS to prepare, and review for environmental compatibility, a Comprehensive Plan for the Town. The final scope of the Town's GEIS, prepared in May 2001, by the Amherst Planning Department with Wallace Roberts & Todd LLC, is the latest step in their effort to include the public in the Comprehensive Plan. Every effort will be taken to assure that the Campus Master Plan complements, and does not conflict with, the Town's Plan.

The Draft Bicentennial Comprehensive Plan[16] summary states, "In the Vision of Amherst in 2018, the Town is renowned for an exceptional quality of life that is based upon three fundamental attributes:

- Á Livability, encompassing healthy neighborhoods, outstanding public facilities and services, and an active community life.

- Á Community Character, through the management of growth, and change to preserve natural and cultural resources, maintain green space throughout Amherst, and revitalize older neighborhoods and commercial corridors, while accommodating quality new development.

[16] Dated December 2002 and available on the Town's website.

- Shared Direction, with Amherst as a partner in the renewed prosperity of the Buffalo-Niagara region, working to balance its roles as a premier residential community and a complementary center of regional activity."

Further, it states, "As an expression of citizen expectations and directions for the future, the Vision Statement establishes the mandate for the policies and action programs contained in the Comprehensive Plan. These policies and action programs, in turn, are designed to produce incremental changes towards achieving the Vision over the two-decade time horizon of the Plan."

Four Key Initiatives, or major changes of direction from current policies, are proposed to provide a focus for action as the Town works to move towards a position of excellence as articulated in the Vision Statement. These Key Initiatives are:

- Aesthetic/Community Character: To be renowned for the beauty, character, and environmental quality of Amherst.

- Education: Capitalizing on the presence of the University at Buffalo, other institutions of higher learning, and outstanding public school districts, to become known as one of the nation's leading "knowledge-based" communities.

- Revitalization: To become a model for effective reinvestment and revitalization of older neighborhoods.

- Governance: To exercise leadership by providing excellent services and facilities, ensuring fiscal balance, and managing development to promote predictability, fairness, and quality.

Amherst identifies seven Plan Elements:

1.) Land Use and Development

- Revitalize older neighborhoods and commercial corridors.

- Promote quality new development.

- Promote a network of parks, open spaces, and greenways throughout the community.

2.) Natural and Cultural Resources

- Reinforce open space.

- Protect sensitive environmental resources.

- Plant trees and re-vegetate.

3.) Economic Development

- Promote a healthy tax and employment base.
- Increase economic development partnerships with governmental agencies and private businesses and institutions, particularly the University at Buffalo.
- Prevent adverse commercial development impacts on community character and quality of life.
- Promote regional economic development.

4.) Transportation

- Target capital and operational improvements to the road network to increase mobility and address severe congestion problems.
- Invest in creating a town-wide bicycle/pedestrian network comprised of on-street and off-street facilities.*?
- Improve transit service linked to mixed-use activity centers proposed in the Land Use and Development Element.

5.) Infrastructure

- Improve storm water management.
- Maintain and upgrade sanitary sewer infrastructure.

6.) Housing and Neighborhoods

- Encourage a variety of housing types and prices, including higher density residential uses in locations such as mixed-use activity centers. Promote revitalization of older neighborhoods through measures such as code enforcement, capital improvements, and design standards.

7.) Community Facilities

- Establish an on-going system to objectively identify community facility and service needs for use in planning and programming.
- Identify opportunities to locate community facilities to achieve Comprehensive Plan objectives (e.g., strengthening neighborhoods or reinforcing mixed-use activity centers).

- Pursue a variety of strategies to ensure that community facility and service costs are reconciled with the fiscal capability of the Town.

Amherst also recently commissioned a Recreation and Parks Master Plan. A draft version, dated February 2003, was obtained for review. The Plan identifies a demand within the Town for regulation-size hardball diamonds, football fields, soccer fields, playgrounds, and a recreation complex. In addition, it is stated that school facilities and fields are becoming less accessible by community organizations, resulting in greater demand for affordable and accessible facilities and fields.

The Plan indicates that "[c]reative arrangements must be explored to ensure that these facilities remain accessible to the community at large." Erie Community College is identified as an important public or quasi-public organization that plays an important role in the Town's leisure delivery system. The Plan also states that "[a]lthough school facilities represent a significant resource in the Town, their continued availability and affordability are ever-present concerns." It also states, "For the most part, however, the public has indicated that the recreational opportunities in Amherst are quite good." The connection between the recreational needs of the Town and ECC is apparent and recreational infrastructure is an important component of Town character.

Finally, the Recreation Plan recommends that, "[p]ending the outcome of the Erie Community College institutional assessment:

- …the Town should discuss the opportunity of acquiring and/or operating the ECC North Campus indoor and outdoor recreational facilities for community use."

- The Town should "…develop a community recreation center (with a gymnasium, outdoor spray pad/water play, playground, and other indoor and outdoor amenities as required) in the Eggertsville area."

The connection between the recreational needs of the Town and ECC is apparent and recreational infrastructure is an important component of Town character.

4.2.6 Pipeline Project Inventory for Cumulative Impact Analysis

Cumulative Impact Analysis Methodology

All potential environmental impacts, including primary, secondary, and cumulative impacts, will be analyzed. Among the three, the most difficult to understand and address are cumulative and secondary impacts.

Primary environmental impacts are direct impacts. An example of this type of impact is the impact from added vehicular traffic to local streets that may be expected from increased student enrollment.

Secondary environmental impacts are indirect impacts that are reasonably foreseeable, but occur at a later time or a greater distance from the proposed action. A type of secondary impact pertinent to this undertaking is called "induced growth." Both the positive and negative consequences of induced impacts will be analyzed. For example, the positive socioeconomic and negative environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of an off-site bookstore, located near an expanding campus, to compete with and draw customers away from an on-site bookstore, will be analyzed.

Cumulative impacts are impacts on the environment that result from the incremental or increased impact of an action when the impacts of that action are added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.[17] In this administrative procedure, the "action" is the deployment of funds to select, initiate, and complete a preferred Campus Master Plan from the three reasonable alternatives available.

Cumulative impacts must be addressed "when actions are proposed to or will foreseeably take place simultaneously or sequentially in a way that their combined impacts may be significant."[18] Further, cumulative impact assessment must be done under the circumstances where "one action is an interdependent part of a larger action or included as part of any long range plan; one action is likely to be undertaken as a result of the proposed action or will likely be triggered by the proposed action; and, one action cannot or will not proceed unless another action is taken or one action is dependent on another."[19] In addition, cumulative impacts must be addressed if the impacts of related or unrelated actions may be incrementally significant and the impacts themselves are related, as well as those that are sufficiently close geographically. The NYSDEC provides no further direction concerning the geographical boundary of the cumulative impacts to be analyzed. The Board, however, has determined that it will utilize a "reasonably worst case approach" for all analyses to assure significant adverse impacts are revealed and minimized. Therefore, the geographic boundaries will be determined by the discipline with the most geographically dispersed potential impact. In this case, it is determined that traffic-generated impacts will have the most far ranging geographical impact. The DGEIS is considering all of the major travel corridors in the County in the Traffic Impact Analysis.

The GEIS will consider as cumulative the impacts of each of the infrastructure additions proposed through the 13-year planning period at each campus. This includes anticipated private sector partnering to be sought and encouraged through planned efforts, options, spaces, and infrastructure. An example of planned activity impacts are those that may be associated with additional off-site traffic arriving on-campus to supply or purchase books. These impacts may result from the activities emanating from a contemporary style, privately owned and operated, bookstore. Such increased traffic may be generated by the change in services offered by the

[17] The SEQR Handbook, November 1992, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
[18] Ibid
[19] Ibid

private sector partner above and beyond the services offered by a traditional college-run bookstore.

The positive aspects of such economic development will also be analyzed and factored into decision-making by the Board.

Finally, to assure that all adverse cumulative impacts are analyzed and properly minimized, the Board has directed that the already established plans for each of the affected communities be factored into cumulative impact analysis by investigating, and incorporating into the analysis, all significant actions currently proposed in each jurisdiction that may be within the impact zone of investigation. In this regard, an inventory[20] of all projects proposed in the project-affected areas were compiled.

Pipeline Projects

Twenty-seven (27) proposed projects have been identified within the immediate vicinity of the North Campus in the Town of Amherst. Of those, nine (9) are small-scale additions to existing commercial enterprises (e.g., veterinarian office), and one (1) is a minor addition to an apartment complex. These should have no measurable effect. The remaining proposals include twelve (12) new office buildings, apartments, condominiums, and detached single-family housing (one development of each, and a small variety of other commercial structures). Each has undergone or is undergoing a regulatory review to assure compliance with zoning and other community-based requirements to assure compatibility with the Town's plans and regulations.

4.2.7 Community Services

4.2.7.1 Existing Utilities

4.2.7.1.1 Water

The main water distribution system enters the Campus from Youngs Road. The Town of Amherst receives its water supply from the Erie County Water Authority (ECWA) through a Lease-Management Agreement (LMA). According to the Town of Amherst, the water system has acceptable fire flow protection and higher than average pressures. At this time, there are no limitations on expansion of the water system to accommodate future growth.[21]

[20] Projects compiled from Planning Departments of each effected jurisdiction.
[21] id 7 at 8-1

4.2.7.1.2 Sewer

The sanitary sewer system on the North Campus is in poor to fair condition with older lines prone to breaking. There are issues with the sanitary system on a site level and on a building level where replacements are necessary. The main sanitary system flows into municipal lines on Wehrle and Youngs Roads.

4.2.7.1.3 Campus Heating Systems

There are four heating plants on the North Campus. They are located in the Nunan Service Building, Spring Student Center, Kittinger Hall, and Bretschger Technical Center. The heating systems were refurbished in 1999-2000 using a direct-buried, pre-insulated or installed pipe tunnel.

There is no central air conditioning system on the North Campus. Gleasner Hall, Kittinger Hall, Spring Student Center, and Dry Memorial Library are partially or entirely air conditioned by individual building systems.

4.2.7.1.4 Electrical Power

The North Campus is provided with electrical power by Niagara Mohawk, a National Grid Company.

The 4160V incoming electrical service comes into the main 5kV Westinghouse switchgear located in the 700 wing of Bretschger Technical Center. There is one meter, which serves the entire Campus. The power is distributed through an underground loop system to each building except the Child Care Center, which receives power from a circuit breaker in the Bell Sports Center. Power is at maximum capacity. There is also a 75’ transmission tower located adjacent to Gleasner Hall.

4.2.7.1.5 Natural Gas

Natural Gas is provided to the North Campus by Niagara Mohawk. Natural gas distribution service enters the Campus from Wehrle Drive and services all buildings.

4.2.7.1.6 Telecommunications

The majority of telecommunication services for the North Campus are provided by Adelphia Communications. Business telephone lines are served by Verizon. Internet service is provided through a link with the University at Buffalo and the campus T1 lines are leased through Adelphia Communications.

4.2.7.2 Emergency and Protective Services

4.2.7.2.1 Police

Police protection for the Town of Amherst is provided by the Town Police Department. Serving 54 square miles, the police department has 151 sworn officers and 35 civilian employees.

4.2.7.2.2 Fire

Fire protection for the Town of Amherst is provided through 13 Volunteer Fire Stations. In addition, the Town of Amherst Fire Chiefs Association coordinates services. The fire stations are located in the following locations:

- East Amherst
- Eggertsville
- Ellicott Creek
- Getzville
- Main Transit
- North Amherst
- North Bailey
- Snyder
- Swormville
- Williamsville/Hutchinson

4.2.7.2.3 EMS

Emergency medical services are provided through the Town of Amherst Fire Stations.

4.2.7.3 Waste Management

Waste management services are provided by the Town's Office of Refuse Control.

4.2.7.4 Educational Facilities

The Williamsville Central School District provides K-12 educational services to approximately 2,450 students. The school district consists of two elementary schools, Windermere Boulevard on the west and Smallwood Drive on the east, Amherst Middle School on the south, and Amherst Central High School in the middle of the District.[22]

4.2.8 Historic and Archaeological Resources

A Phase 1A cultural resource site file and literature research was conducted to determine if previously identified prehistoric and historic cultural resources are located within or adjacent to ECC's North Campus, South Campus, City Campus, and potential induced development and public-private partnership areas defined for each. Cultural resources include historic and prehistoric archaeological sites, as well as standing structures over 50 years of age, and cultural features such as historic roads, railroads, fence lines, cemeteries, and the like. Potential adverse impacts on such cultural resources include, but are not limited to, impacts that result directly from construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation work, and utility relocations, as well as indirect impacts such as visual or viewshed impacts, access impairment, and inundation.

[22] Amherst Central Schools Website: www.amherstschools.org

The Phase 1A site file search included detailed site, structure, and report file reviews to identify known and potential sites/structures within and adjacent to each Campus. Site file checks were conducted using information from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation and the SUNY Buffalo Archaeological Survey. Documentary research on the environmental, prehistoric, and historic settings of the Campuses also allowed for the development of research contexts necessary to guide subsequent interpretations of cultural materials found during any future field testing. The Phase 1A research and report are produced following New York Archaeological Council (NYAC 1994 and 2000) guidelines.

Regarding the North Campus, the distribution of previously recorded prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, along with other background research data, suggests that this project area has a variable prehistoric sensitivity. Sensitivity refers to the potential to find certain types of prehistoric archaeological sites within the project area. Archaeological sensitivity is high with respect to small prehistoric sites such as findspots, camp sites, and workshops. There is a moderate sensitivity for quarry sites, given the project area's close proximity to the Onondaga escarpment—a major source of chert. A moderate to low sensitivity is assigned for large sites, such as base camps and villages.

The site files indicate that one (1) National Register[23] Eligible structure lies within the viewshed of the North Campus project area (Photo N-34). Historic Map analysis reveals that fifteen (15) structures in the project area are older than 50 years of age and have not been inventoried. Twelve (12) structures in the project area have been inventoried and no eligibility determination has been made.

The results of the Phase 1A site file and literature search for the North Campus project area indicates that cultural resources likely exist. A Phase 1B Reconnaissance Survey: Field Investigation is recommended if future development is anticipated in the North Campus project area. The scope of the Phase 1B Reconnaissance Survey cannot be determined without refinement of the boundary limits. The potential need for focused site examination and data recovery/mitigation stages cannot be determined until a Phase 1B Reconnaissance Survey: Field Investigation is conducted. The Phase 1B Reconnaissance Survey should comply with New York Archaeological Council (NYAC 1994 and 2000) Work Scope Specifications. Refer to Appendix B for the Phase 1A Report, which includes an inventory of the existing historic, cultural, and prehistoric conditions for the North Campus.

[23] The National Historic Preservation Act (Public Law 89-665) established legal guidelines for the preservation of cultural artifacts. Title I of this legislation provided for the Secretary of the Interior to establish the National Register of Historic Places to include "sites, buildings, objects, districts and structures significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture." These could be of national, state, or local significance. Criteria used in evaluating sites and properties have been established and are used to determine eligibility for inclusion in the National Register. Refer to the National Register Bulletin #15, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*, U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service Cultural Resources, Interagency Resource Division for a full description of these criteria and their application.

4.2.9 Public Health – Hazardous Materials

4.2.9.1 Pertinent On-site Environmental Information

4.2.9.1.1 Waste Generation

The North Campus is registered as a small-quantity generator of Resource Conservation Recovery Act (RCRA) waste. This ECC Campus is licensed to generate as much as 2,000 pounds of up to seven different waste types including lead, arsenic, and ignitable hazardous wastes. There are two recorded waste-related incidents that occurred at the North Campus. In 1997, there was a waste-containing lab pack that leaked at the loading dock. This issue was remedied and the lab pack was disposed off-site. In 2000, the facility was cited for manifest and generator violations apparently associated with paperwork, oversight, and documentation. The enforcement action was a written, informal notification.

Also, facility records dated 2001 indicated the presence of two transformers in storage which may contain PCBs.

4.2.9.1.2 Petroleum Storage

Database searches and ECC-supplied information indicate that there are at least three storage tanks on-campus near the Nunan Service building. One is a 10,000-gallon fuel tank and two are aboveground 500-gallon unleaded gasoline and diesel tanks. Records indicate that these are permitted. ECC records also indicate that at least two other buildings may have fuel oil tanks associated with emergency boiler heating. These are each 8,000-gallon tanks and were tested in 2003 and are permitted until 2008.

Historical leaking tank and spill data indicate that in 1987, 1991, and 1994, several tanks failed their testing and were removed. An 8,000-gallon fuel oil tank was closed in 1987; in 1991, a 1,000-gallon unleaded gasoline tank was removed; and in 1994, a 1,000-gallon leaded gasoline tank was removed. The 1991 incident required a monitoring well to be installed. The spill is presently inactive.

There was also an incident in May 1994 where gasoline odors were noted in irrigation water. Nothing was found and the incident was closed.

4.2.9.1.3 Asbestos

An Asbestos Management Plan was completed for the North Campus in 1993. This report identified asbestos-containing materials (ACM) in seven buildings at the facility. Some remediation was suggested; however, no documentation on any abatement could be found.

The asbestos materials consisted of insulation of pipe fittings, boiler insulation and breeching, sprayed-on insulation, floor tiles and mastic, transite pipe, transite panels, ceiling tiles, plaster, transite countertops, and transite board.

4.2.9.2 Pertinent Off-site Environmental Information

4.2.9.2.1 Waste Generation

Two nearby companies, Baxter Healthcare/American Hospital Supply and Ingram Micro, both on Wehrle Drive, are listed as small quantity hazardous waste generators. No violations were found.

4.2.9.2.2 Petroleum Storage

- Several businesses around the ECC Campus have or had petroleum storage tanks.
- Baxter Healthcare/American Hospital Supply had a 10,000-gallon tank removed in 1989.
- The NOCO Gas Station at 6125 Main Street has at least two operating underground storage tanks (10,000 and 6,000 gallons). Three previous tanks at the facility failed testing and were removed (a 4,000-gallon tank in 1987, and two 4,000-gallon tanks in 1998).
- Mr. Oil Change at 6126 Main Street has five registered 1,000-gallon oil tanks (these were installed in 1992).
- Getty Oil (formerly Petro USA) at 6130 Main Street contains two registered gasoline tanks (10,000 and 12,000 gallons). A 4,000-gallon tank incident was reported in 1997 and was removed in 1999. In 1998, a spill was identified at the site and led to the removal of a 4,000-gallon tank and a 6,000-gallon tank.

4.3 City Campus

4.3.1 Geology

4.3.1.1 Subsurface

The City of Buffalo is located on the eastern shores of Lake Erie, the fourth largest of the Great Lakes. The Lake was formed as a result of Pleistocene Epoch glacier erosion and melting.

4.3.1.2 Surface

The City Campus is located on urban land. Over the years, the soils within the City of Buffalo have been previously disturbed and consist of both natural and man-made fill. The soil classification for the majority of the City is Urban. A significant portion of the City is impervious.

4.3.1.3 Topography

The topography of the City Campus and surrounding areas is typically level with no significant topographic features. The City is located approximately 705 feet above sea level.

4.3.2 Water Resources

4.3.2.1 Groundwater

It is expected that groundwater conditions will vary with location, changes in soil or rock conditions, and seasonal fluctuations in precipitation and runoff. Critical groundwater resources are not present at the City Campus site.

4.3.2.2 Surface Water

While the City of Buffalo is located in the eastern basin of Lake Erie, no surface water bodies are located on the City Campus site or in the immediate area.

Floodplain

The existing City Campus is not located within a floodplain. In addition, no floodplain boundaries impact the proposed induced development zone.

Storm Water

The City of Buffalo has a combined sanitary and storm sewer system. With the majority of these lines installed prior to 1941, the system is aging and continued line replacement and maintenance is necessary. The system is generally adequate, except during periods of heavy precipitation when sewer overflow outfalls can occur. Storm water from the City Campus drains via the City of Buffalo combined system. Currently, one hundred percent of the City Campus is impervious.

4.3.2.3 Wetlands

No wetlands are present on the City Campus. There is, however, a wetland identified in the National Wetlands Inventory located 500 feet south of the Campus, within the induced development area.

Refer to *Figure 4.3.2-1 Hydrologic Features – City Campus* for geographic reference of the location of Lake Erie and the Buffalo River, as well as existing floodplains and wetlands in relation to the City Campus.

FIGURE 4.3.2-1

HYDROLOGIC FEATURES – CITY CAMPUS

4.3.3 Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecology

4.3.3.1 Vegetation

The City Campus is located in an urban setting with a mix of street trees. A small pocket-park is located to the northwest of the Campus with an open-maintained lawn and deciduous trees.

4.3.3.2 Fish and Wildlife

Terrestrial Species

The City Campus and surrounding areas possess terrestrial species common to urban areas.

Aquatic Species

The City Campus does not contain any surface-water features.

4.3.3.3 Threatened and Endangered Species

Pursuant to a letter dated July 3, 2003, from the NYSDEC New York Natural Heritage Program, there are no records of known occurrences of rare or State-listed animals and plants, significant natural communities, or significant habitats, on or in the immediate vicinity of the City Campus (*DGEIS Appendix B Correspondences* – Betty A. Ketcham, Information Services, NY Natural Heritage Program, 7-3-03). However, according to this letter, some endangered species and species of interest have been observed in the City of Buffalo, but outside areas proposed for development under review in the DGEIS.

4.3.3.4 Critical Environmental Areas

There are currently no critical environmental areas on or near the City Campus. According to the NYSDEC, local agencies may designate geographic areas within their boundaries as "Critical Environmental Areas" (CEAs). State agencies may also designate geographic areas they own, manage, or regulate. A designated CEA must have a unique character relating to a natural setting; a benefit or threat to human health; or agricultural, social, cultural, historic, archaeological, or recreational values.

4.3.4 Land Use, Zoning, and Community Character

4.3.4.1 Surrounding Land Uses

As depicted in *Figure 4.3.4-1 Land Use – City Campus*, a mix of commercial, community services, recreational, residential, light industrial, and public uses surround the City Campus. Furthermore, there are numerous surface parking lots in the general vicinity of the Campus.

Two new tracts of residential housing exist east of the City Campus across Michigan Avenue. A large tract of public housing separates these housing developments from each other. There is a hospital located immediately North of the public housing development.

FIGURE 4.3.4-1

LAND USE – CITY CAMPUS

The City Campus is located in the southeastern core of Downtown Buffalo. A cacophony of sounds and a variety of lighting give this portion of Buffalo a feeling of vitality. It is generally busy and intensively used. Unlike the North and South Campuses, the Downtown Campus has a decidedly urban ambience. Also, unlike the North and South Campuses, development is vertical, with tall city buildings defining enclosed urban, pedestrian, and street spaces. The key architectural element is the Old Post Office, which under adaptive reuse now functions as the Downtown Campus. The Gothic Revival style granite structure was constructed in 1901 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.[24] Its 244-foot high ornate tower is highly visible and is an easily recognizable feature of Buffalo's skyline.

Complex highway, collector and urban streets, pedestrian ways, and parks make the Downtown location a dense, compact stage for a variety of urban activities all contributing to the character of the project-affected landscape. The Niagara Frontier Transportation Administration (NFTA) building, Dunn Tire Park, and Washington Street Park are other important features of this part of Downtown Buffalo contributing to the area's community character. In all, the Downtown Campus, like the City that surrounds it, is a viable, busy, and intensively used place.

4.3.4.2 Existing Zoning/Permitted Uses/Density for Each Campus and Surrounding Areas

City Campus

As depicted on *Figure 4.3.4-2 Zoning – City Campus*, the Post Office Building is located within the S-Downtown District – the Downtown Opportunity District, while the Flickinger Building is located in the M1 or Light Industrial District.

Surrounding Area

Also shown on *Figure 4.3.4-2*, the City Campus is surrounded by lands zoned as M1, Downtown Opportunity District, Institutional – Light Industrial, General Commercial (CM), Community Business (C2), and Dwelling (R3).

4.3.4.3 Aesthetics

The aesthetics of the City Campus are consistent with the surrounding areas, and, in some cases, are more pleasing than surrounding areas. The Post Office Building with its Gothic Revival style is the main focal point of the campus. The newer Flickinger Building is of modern design and is aesthetically pleasing.

Dunn Tire Park is the most dominant structure in the immediate vicinity of the Campus. Several other buildings surround the Campus, some occupied and others vacant. Numerous surface parking lots also exist around the City Campus. A limited number of street trees and plantings and pedestrian-scaled amenities exist in and around the Campus. Unfortunately, certain sections

[24] Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation

of Downtown near the City Campus have fallen into disrepair and detract from the aesthetics of the Campus.

FIGURE 4.3.4-2

ZONING – CITY CAMPUS

4.3.4.4 Noise

The City of Buffalo regulates noise impacts through §293 of the City Code. The main source of noise in and around the City Campus consists of automobile traffic on City streets and I-190 to the south. Located in an urban center, the City Campus experiences typical sounds prevalent in downtown areas.

4.3.4.5 Lighting

The City does not have regulations pertaining to the regulation of lighting impacts. The main source of ambient light in and around the City Campus can be attributed to street lights and lighting from City buildings and automobiles. Ambient light in Buffalo is generally visible throughout the metropolitan region. The City Campus is not a significant contributor to ambient light in the region.

4.3.4.6 Community Recreational Facilities

There are approximately 120 park facilities and countless areas of green spaces in the City of Buffalo.[25] Parks closest to the City Campus include Washington Street Park located directly northwest of the Post Office Building, and J.F.K. Memorial Park located approximately ¼ mile east of the Campus. Washington Street Park provides open space for gatherings and low impact recreational activities. J.F.K. Memorial Park is a much larger neighborhood park and offers playfields, trails, and open areas for a multitude of recreational activities.

As previously mentioned, Dunn Tire Park is located to the south of the City Campus and is a major recreational asset for the City. Also, a major multi-use entertainment, recreational, and commercial waterfront project is planned by the City of Buffalo and Erie County along the Lake Erie waterfront southwest of the City Campus. This significant project is proposed to include a beach, indoor snowboarding, retail shopping, restaurants, performance venues, and many more recreation, entertainment, and commercial uses.

4.3.5 Existing Planning Initiatives and Land Use Plans

Current planning initiatives and projects in and around the City of Buffalo include *The Queen City Hub: A Regional Action Plan for Downtown Buffalo* and the Greater Buffalo Regional Transportation Council's 2025 Long Range Plan, both currently under implementation. Additional plans and initiatives include the *Erie Niagara Framework for Regional Growth;* the Erie Niagara Regional Partnership Economic Development Strategy; the recent rejuvenation of the Erie County Industrial Development Agency; the Buffalo Economic Renaissance Corporation and the Office of Strategic Planning; the Public Bridge Authority's plan to expand the Peace Bridge; and Buffalo's Joint Schools Construction Board's School Reconstruction Plan.[26]

[25] City of Buffalo Draft Comprehensive Plan, June 26, 2003. pg. 45
[26] Id 24 at 63

The City of Buffalo recently released its draft Comprehensive Plan on June 26, 2003. The Plan looks forward to the year 2025, and builds on and integrates the above-mentioned planning initiatives and others currently in progress in Buffalo. The Comprehensive Plan sets forth seven planning policies to implement the Plan's two key development priorities: *Fixing the Basics* and *Building on Assets*.

Fixing the Basics

The City of Buffalo has identified three Policies with respect to Fixing the Basics. They are maintaining the city's infrastructure; delivering quality municipal services; and restoring the Ellicott and Olmsted systems and the waterfront. To fix the basics, the citizens of Buffalo expressed four priorities: Protect Property Values, Ensure Public Safety, Promote Job Creation and Employment, and Provide Quality Choice in Education.

Building on Assets

The City of Buffalo has identified four Policies with respect to Building on Assets. They are transforming the economy; building schools; implementing community preservation plans; and rebuilding neighborhoods.

The DGEIS will analyze how each Alternative coincides with the City of Buffalo's Comprehensive Plan. Refer to *DGEIS Section 5* for each Alternative's respective analysis.

4.3.6 Pipeline Project Inventory for Cumulative Impact Analysis

Refer to *DGEIS Section 4.2.6* for an overview of the Cumulative Impact Analysis methodology used in this DGEIS.

Pipeline Projects

A listing of pipeline projects for the City of Buffalo was unavailable for inclusion in the DGEIS. They will be discussed and analyzed in the FGEIS.

4.3.7 Community Services

4.3.7.1 Existing Utilities

4.3.7.1.1 Water

Lake Erie is the public water source for the City of Buffalo. A 12-foot by 12-foot conduit carries water from Lake Erie to the Colonel Ward Water Treatment Plant. The capacity is currently adequate to accommodate present and future demand.[27]

[27] Id 24 at 56

4.3.7.1.2 Sewer

The City has a combined storm and sanitary sewer system. The sewage treatment plant is located on Bird Island, provides primary and secondary treatment to sewage, and has a capacity of 180 million gallons per day (GPD), sufficient to serve a population of 650,000 people.

4.3.7.1.3 Campus Heating Systems

The Academic Building is heated and air conditioned by HVAC systems that date from the 1981 renovation. The systems consist of heat pumps serving the perimeter classrooms and offices and air handling units serving the spaces in new construction located in the central atrium. Chillers, boilers, and ventilation air handling units are located in the basement and cooling towers are located on the roof. The system is equipped with heat recovery equipment.

HVAC is provided by heat pumps and rooftop air handling equipment that also controls the temperature of the water in the swimming pools. A radiant hot water system supplements the air systems at the building's perimeter. Three gas-fired boilers provide heat for the systems. The systems are equipped with heat recovery equipment.

Owing to their complexity, these systems are reputed to be a drain on the financial and manpower resources of ECC to a point that belies the fact that they are among the newest HVAC systems in the three-campus ECC system.

4.3.7.1.4 Electrical Power

Niagara Mohawk, a National Grid Company, provides electric power to the City Campus. Capacity and affordability of electricity in the City are concerns of local officials. Currently, the New York Power Authority facilities on the Niagara River will undergo re-licensing in 2004/2005. Re-licensing represents an opportunity for Buffalo-Niagara region businesses and communities to obtain the most favorable electricity rates possible.[28]

Energy efficiency is garnering more attention on a national level, and the City of Buffalo is no exception. The recent opening of the New York State Energy and Research Development Authority (NYSERDA) in downtown Buffalo has only served to increase local interest in developing alternative sources of power. NYSERDA has designated Main Street as a Rebuild New York Community Energy Target Zone, and has been joined by the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the New York Power Authority, the University at Buffalo Green Office and School of Architecture and Planning, and Erie County in promoting energy efficiency and green building practices.[29]

[28] Id 24 at 57
[29] Id

4.3.7.1.5 Natural Gas

Niagara Mohawk provides the Flickinger Center with Natural Gas.

4.3.7.1.6 Telecommunications

The majority of telecommunication services for the City Campus are provided by Adelphia Communications. Business telephone lines are served by Verizon. Internet service is provided through a link with the University at Buffalo and the Campus' T1 lines are leased through Adelphia Communications.

The City of Buffalo and surrounding region has more than 80,000 miles of fiber optics installed and managed by private companies. According to the City's 2003 Draft Comprehensive Plan, the Buffalo region is the fifth best-equipped region in the world.

4.3.7.2 Emergency and Protective Services

4.3.7.2.1 Police

Police protection in the City of Buffalo is provided by the City Police Department with 1,300 members, as well as the Erie County Sheriff's Department.

4.3.7.2.2 Fire

Fire protection for the City of Buffalo is provided by the City's Fire Department and is supported by 24 Fire Stations located throughout the City.

4.3.7.2.3 EMS

Emergency Medical Services are provided by the City of Buffalo.

4.3.7.3 Waste Management

Waste management in the City of Buffalo is addressed by Buffalo Street Sanitation.

4.3.7.4 Educational Facilities

Buffalo Public Schools currently serve 46,000 students in 80 educational facilities. The District has recently developed a $1 billion City school rebuilding plan for 78 of the existing schools.

4.3.8 Historic and Archaeological Resources

The distribution of the previously recorded sites noted in *DGEIS Section 4.2.8* above, along with the other background research data, suggests that the project area has a variable prehistoric sensitivity. There is a moderate sensitivity for artifact findspots, small lithic scatters, and short-term camps, and a low sensitivity for large base camps, villages, quarries, and burials. These sensitivity assessments have been revised to low for sites in all portions of the project area due to multiple episodes of historic building.

There are two (2) National Landmark properties, seven (7) National Register Listed, and twenty-two (22) National Register Eligible properties within the project area or within the viewshed of

the project area. There are thirty-one (31) properties in the portion of the Joseph Ellicott National Register District located in the project area. Eighty-nine (89) properties have been inventoried and no eligibility determination has been made.

The results of the Phase 1A Site Search and Literature Research for the Downtown Campus project area indicate that cultural resources exist within the project area. A Phase 1B Reconnaissance Survey: Field Investigation is recommended if future development is anticipated in the Downtown Campus project area. The scope of the Phase 1B Reconnaissance Survey cannot be determined without refinement of the boundary limits. The potential need for focused site examination and data recovery/mitigation stages cannot be determined until a Phase 1B Reconnaissance Survey: Field Investigation is conducted. The Phase 1B Reconnaissance Survey should comply with New York Archaeological Council (NYAC 1994 and 2000) Work Scope Specifications. Refer to *DGEIS Appendix C* for the Phase 1A Report, which includes an inventory of the existing historic, cultural, and prehistoric conditions for the City Campus.

4.3.9 Public Health – Hazardous Materials

The area of study for this document is an expanded City Campus area. Descriptions of the limits of the study block properties are as follows:

- Location 1: Existing ECC Building (former Post Office Building) – Swan Street, Oak Street, S. Division Street, and Ellicott Street.
- Location 2: Green Space – S. Division Street, Oak Street, N. Division Street, and Ellicott Street.
- Location 3: NFTA Transportation Center – N. Division Street, Oak Street, Eagle Street, and Ellicott Street.
- Location 4: Mixed Use Structure – Eagle Street, Oak Street, Clinton Street, and Ellicott Street.
- Location 5: Flickinger Center – Swan Street, Elm Street, S. Division Street, and Oak Street.
- Location 6: Proposed Academic Facility – S. Division Street, Elm Street, N. Division Street, and Oak Street.
- Location 7: Proposed Academic Facility – N. Division Street, Elm Street, Eagle Street, and Oak Street.
- Location 8: Potential Structured Parking – Seneca Street, Michigan Avenue, Swan Street, and Elm Street.
- Location 9: Potential Structured Parking – Swan Street, Michigan Avenue, S. Division Street, and Elm Street.
- Location 10: Proposed Public Safety Building – S. Division Street, Michigan Avenue, N. Division Street, and Elm Street.

- Location 11: Potential Surface Parking – Michigan Avenue at Clinton Street.

These location numbers will be used in this document to identify the block location. Refer to *Figure 4.3.9-1 Alternative 2 Study Area – City Campus and Adjacent Facilities* for further reference on their specific locations downtown.

4.3.9.1 Location 1 and Location 5 – Pertinent Environmental Information on Existing ECC Buildings (Former Post Office and Flickinger Center)

4.3.9.1.1 Waste Generation

The City Campus is a conditionally exempt, small quantity generator of hazardous waste. No violations were found.

4.3.9.1.2 Petroleum and Other Materials Storage

- Database searches and ECC-supplied information indicate that there appear to be no registered storage tanks present at the former Post Office site.
- The Flickinger Center has two 300-gallon aboveground plastic storage tanks that contain sodium hypochlorite.
- Past records indicate that a 10,000-gallon fuel oil storage tank at the former Post Office site was closed in place in 1995.
- Additionally, one or more underground tanks were uncovered during the construction of the Flickinger Center. These were reportedly excavated, removed, and disposed off-site.

FIGURE 4.3.9-1

ALTERNATIVE 2 STUDY AREA – CITY CAMPUS AND ADJACENT FACILITIES

4.3.9.1.3 Asbestos

No asbestos management plan was found for the former Post Office Building, although one was reportedly completed. A search of Erie County DPW archives was unable to locate such a document. ECC was also unable to locate this document.

4.3.9.2 Pertinent Environmental Information for Potential Development Locations

4.3.9.2.1 Location 2 – Green Space

No database information could be found for this location.

4.3.9.2.2 Location 3 – NFTA and Transportation Bus Facility

4.3.9.2.2.1 Waste Generation

NFTA is listed as a small quantity generator of hazardous waste. No violations were found.

4.3.9.2.2.2 Petroleum Storage

Greyhound appears to have one tank in service. It is a 12,000-gallon underground diesel fuel storage tank installed in 1993. A second tank, which had been installed in 1979, was closed and removed in 1993.

There are several reported incidents associated with leaking storage tanks for this site. The first in 1991 was a diesel tank test failure, which was closed the same year. A subsequent diesel tank test failed in 1992 and closed that same year. A third event occurred in 1994 with a tank test failure traced to a bent pipe. Subsequent activities lead to closure after this incident in 1995. A fourth leaking tank incident occurred in 1996 with a reported loss of up to 8,000 gallons of diesel, with approximately 7,000 gallons recovered. This spill appears to be at an inactive status.

4.3.9.2.2.3 Asbestos

Although no asbestos survey information is available, the building (based on the age) may contain some asbestos materials that would require abatement prior to demolition or redevelopment.

4.3.9.2.3 Location 4 – Mixed Use Development

No database information could be found for this location.

4.3.9.2.4 Location 6 – Academic Facility

No database information could be found for this location.

4.3.9.2.5 Location 7 – New Development

No database information could be found for this location.

4.3.9.2.6 Location 8 – Structured Parking

No database information could be found for this location.

4.3.9.2.7 Location 9 – Structured Parking

No database information could be found for this location.

4.3.9.2.7.1 Waste Generation

Jackson Bates at 19 Elm Street on this block is listed as a small quantity generator of hazardous wastes. No violations were found.

4.3.9.2.7.2 Petroleum Storage

No information on storage tanks appears available for this site.

4.3.9.2.7.3 Asbestos

Although no asbestos survey information is available, the buildings at 17 to 21 Elm Street (based on their age) are likely to contain asbestos materials that would require abatement prior to demolition or redevelopment.

4.3.9.2.8 Location 10 – Proposed Public Safety Service Building

4.3.9.2.8.1 Waste Generation

Goodwill Industries is located on this block and is listed as a small quantity generator of hazardous wastes. No violations were found.

4.3.9.2.8.2 Petroleum Storage

No storage tank information appears available for the block.

4.3.9.2.8.3 Asbestos

Although no asbestos survey information is available, the Goodwill Building (based on its age) is likely to contain asbestos materials that would require abatement prior to demolition or redevelopment. As of June 2003, it appears that renovation/abatement/demolition is underway at this site.

4.3.9.2.9 Location 11 – Potential Surface Parking

No database information could be found for this location.

4.3.9.3 Pertinent Historic Environmental Information for City Campus Development Location

Historical Fire Insurance Maps were available from EDR Sanborn and are summarized below for each block location.

4.3.9.3.1 Location 1 – Existing ECC Building (Former Post Office)

- 1889: Carriage manufacturing, residences, small repair shop
- 1899: Post Office
- 1925: Post Office
- 1951: Post Office
- 1981: Post Office – Ellicott Station
- 1986: Erie Community College

4.3.9.3.2 Location 2 – Green Space

- 1889: School and domestic residences
- 1899: Department of Public Works (DPW) building and mixed use
- 1925: DPW, gas station (corner of S. Division and Oak Streets)
- 1951: DPW, gas station
- 1981: Parking lot
- 1986: Parking lot

4.3.9.3.3 Location 3 – NFTA Transportation Center

- 1889: Domestic residences
- 1899: Still mostly domestic residences
- 1925: Mixed use – nothing obvious
- 1951: Gasoline station (on Oak near Eagle Street), tire sales
- 1981: NFTA Transportation Center (constructed 1977)
- 1986: NFTA Transportation Center

4.3.9.3.4 Location 4 – New Mixed-Use Development

- 1889: Mixed use, bakery, Cornell Lead Co. (lead pipe making) on corner of Clinton and Oak Streets
- 1899: Mixed use, National Biscuit (bakery), and National Lead Company
- 1925: Garage and National Lead Company
- 1951: Mixed commercial use – New York Telephone garage and National Lead Company
- 1981: Municipal parking lot
- 1986: Municipal parking lot

4.3.9.3.5 Location 5 – Flickinger Center

- 1889: Domestic residences
- 1899: Domestic residences
- 1925: United States Postal Services (USPS) garage
- 1951: USPS garage

- Á 1981: Parking lot
- Á 1986: Parking lot

4.3.9.3.6 Location 6 – Proposed Academic Facility

- Á 1889: Domestic residences
- Á 1899: Domestic residences
- Á 1925: Part of the block occupied by International Harvester Sales and Service (battery and welding room present)
- Á 1951: Frontier Linen Supply and auto repair shop present
- Á 1981: Comptek building (constructed in 1980)
- Á 1986: Comptek building

4.3.9.3.7 Location 7 – Proposed Academic Building

- Á 1889**:** Mostly residences, one location called Lubricating Oil Works
- Á 1899: Domestic residences
- Á 1925: Dynamo Exchange, hardware, cylinder and grinding
- Á 1951: Mixed use, Dynamo/Motor Exchange, wholesale hardware, and radio shop
- Á 1981: Parking lot
- Á 1986: Parking lot

4.3.9.3.8 Location 8 – Potential Structured Parking

No Sanborn maps of this area were obtained. See aerial photograph review. This area appeared to be covered with buildings in 1959. By 1983, parking appears were present in a majority of this area.

4.3.9.3.9 Location 9 – Potential Structured Parking

- Á 1889: Hotel and residences
- Á 1899: Hotel and residences
- Á 1925: Auto storage and automotive shop along Elm Street; also Gutman building present
- Á 1951: Filling station (along Elm Street) and auto repair, also Gutman building present
- Á 1981: Parking and Gutman building
- Á 1986: Parking and Gallager Elevator Company

4.3.9.3.10 Location 10 – Proposed Public Safety Services Building

- Á 1889: Hospital and two churches present
- Á 1899: Hospital and two churches present
- Á 1925: One church still present, gas station on corner of S. Division and Michigan
- Á 1951: Goodwill Industries (constructed in 1926-1927), Dynamo/Motor Exchange, gas station still present

- 1981: Goodwill Industries and parking lot
- 1986: Goodwill Industries and parking lot

4.3.9.3.11 Location 11 – Potential Surface Parking (Michigan at Clinton)

No Sanborn maps of this area were obtained. See aerial photograph review; this area appeared as open space since 1966 through at least the mid 1980s.

4.4 South Campus

4.4.1 Geology

4.4.1.1 Subsurface

The South Campus is part of the Erie Ontario Plain in the Towns of Hamburg and Orchard Park. This area has varying bedrock geology including the Hamilton Group, Sonyea Group, Genesee Group, Java Group, and Canadaway Group.[30] Depth to bedrock in this area varies according to soil types and ranges from 20 to 40 feet. The bedrock hardness class is soft. Excavation can occur with trenching machines, small rippers, or backhoes. No blasting would be necessary.

4.4.1.2 Surface

As depicted on *Figure 4.4.1-1 Soils – South Campus*, several soil types are found on the South Campus. The three most prominent soils include Angola Silt Loam with 0-3 percent slopes (AoA), Darien Silt Loam (DbA), and Angola Silt Loam with 3-8 percent slopes (AoB). Small areas of Ilion Silt Loam (In) are located in the southeast corner of the Campus and a minimal amount of Canadice Silt Loam, Channery Till Substratum (Cb) is located at the northern portion of the South Campus site. The AoA and AoB soils are similar in all but their characteristic slopes. The AoA and AoB soils are not typically Prime Farmland Soils. These types of soil have high frost action and do not meet the requirements for hydric soils. AoA and AoB soils often have a wet state high in profile and a layer with low hydraulic conductivity. These soils are poorly drained with a depth to water table of 1 to 3 feet.

DbA soils also have a 0-3 percent slope and are not considered Prime Farmland Soils. These soils are not hydric soils. As with the previously described soils, DbA soils are poorly drained and often have a wet state high in profile and a layer with low hydraulic conductivity. The depth to water table is 1 to 3 feet.

Surrounding soils also include Marilla Channery Silt Loam (MfA), with a 0-3 percent slope, and Manlius Channery Silt Loam (MaB), with a 3-8 percent slope.

[30] Orchard Park, New York – Land Use Study, July 2002. Wendel Duchscherer Architects & Engineers. Pg. II-A-1

FIGURE 4.4.1-1

SOILS – SOUTH CAMPUS

4.4.1.3 Topography

Typically, the area of the South Campus has little significant relief. The elevation is approximately 600-1,000 feet above sea level.[31]

4.4.2 Water Resources

4.4.2.1 Groundwater

As with any location, groundwater will vary according to seasonal precipitation, soil types, and location. The South Campus contains Angola Silt Loam with 0-3 percent slopes (AoA), Darien Silt Loam (DbA), and Angola Silt Loam with 3-8 percent slopes (AoB). AoA and AoB soils have a water table depth of 0.5-1.5 feet. These soils are part of Hydrology Class C. DbB soils are in Hydrology Class C with a water table depth of 0.5-1.0 feet. Class C has slow infiltration rates and typically contains soils with layers impeding downward movement of water, or soils with moderately fine or fine textures.

4.4.2.2 Surface Water

As depicted on *Figure 4.4.2-1 Hydrologic Features – South Campus*, no surface waters are present on the South Campus or the induced development area. A relatively small water body is present immediately south of the existing campus, below U.S. Route 20/Big Tree Road.

Four watersheds are present in the Town of Orchard Park. The portion of the South Campus located in Orchard Park is primarily within the Rush Creek Watershed. Rush Creek flows through the Town of Hamburg and into Lake Erie. Tributaries to Rush Creek are Class C waterbodies. A Class C waterbody is suitable for fishing and for some recreational uses only.

Floodplains

As depicted on *Figure 4.4.2-1*, the South Campus is not located within a floodplain. The nearest floodplains are 100-year floodplains located southwest and north of the Campus.

Storm Water

Storm water on the South Campus is partially distributed to the municipal system and partially to open grassy areas on the Campus. Storm water runoff is one factor impacting water quality in the areas surrounding the South Campus. Improvements to the on-site storm water system will be necessary to fully comply with the recent New York State Storm Water Regulations, regardless of which Alternative is chosen.

[31] id
[32] Id 29 at II-A-3

FIGURE 4.4.2-1

HYDROLOGIC RESOURCES – SOUTH CAMPUS

4.4.2.3 Wetlands

As depicted on *Figure 4.4.2-1 Hydrologic Features – South Campus*, there are no wetlands on the existing South Campus or in the induced development area. A very small wetland identified on the National Wetlands Inventory is located at a distance of approximately 300 feet, in the area directly south of the Campus, below U.S. Route 20/Big Tree Road.

4.4.3 Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecology

4.4.3.1 Vegetation

A significant portion of the South Campus consists of open-maintained lawn and recreational fields with a mix of coniferous and deciduous trees lining the parking lots, interior access roads, and sidewalks.

4.4.3.2 Fish and Wildlife

Terrestrial Species

The South Campus is set within a growing suburban section of the Towns of Orchard Park and Hamburg, and exhibits small terrestrial species common to suburban areas.

Aquatic Resources

There are no surface water features on the South Campus.

4.4.3.3 Threatened and Endangered Species

Pursuant to a letter dated July 3, 2003, from the NYSDEC New York Natural Heritage Program, there are no records of known occurrences of rare or State-listed animals and plants, significant natural communities, or significant habitats, on or in the immediate vicinity of the South Campus (*DGEIS Appendix B Correspondences* – Betty A. Ketcham, Information Services, NY Natural Heritage Program, 7-3-03). However, according to this letter, some endangered species and species of interest have been observed in the Towns of Orchard Park and Hamburg, but outside of areas proposed for development under review in the DGEIS.

4.4.3.4 Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs)

There are currently no CEAs on the South Campus. However, the Eighteen Mile Creek in the southern portion of the Town of Hamburg is designated as a CEA. The location of the South Campus and the induced development zone are not in close proximity to the Eighteen Mile Creek CEA. According to the NYSDEC, local agencies may designate geographic areas within their boundaries as CEAs. State agencies may also designate geographic areas they own, manage, or regulate. A designated CEA must have a unique character relating to a natural setting; a benefit or threat to human health; or agricultural, social, cultural, historic, archaeological, or recreational values.

4.4.4 Land Use, Zoning, and Community Character

As previously mentioned, the South Campus is situated in both the Town of Orchard Park and the Town of Hamburg, each with their own zoning regulations and districts.

4.4.4.1 Surrounding Land Uses

As depicted on *Figure 4.4.4-1 Land Use – South Campus*, land uses surrounding the South Campus include commercial, recreational, and residential. The uses north of the Campus across from U.S. Route 20/Southwestern Boulevard are predominantly commercial, with some residential uses to the northeast. A number of residential lots, along with an apartment complex, are located along the southern border of the Campus fronting U.S. Route 20A/Big Tree Road. There are additional residential uses along the eastern border of the Campus fronting Abbott Road. These residential uses along Abbott and Big Tree Road are the closest adjoining uses to the Campus, and will therefore have to be closely taken into consideration with any proposed development.

North of the Campus exists well-established residential neighborhoods. Other large tracts of residential uses are predominant to the south and southeast, with big-box retail located to the west and southwest in Hamburg. Ralph Wilson Stadium is located east of the Campus in Orchard Park and is a significant feature in this section of the Town.

FIGURE 4.4.4-1

LAND USE – SOUTH CAMPUS

4.4.4.2 Existing Zoning/Permitted Uses/Density for Each Campus and Surrounding Areas

Refer to *Figure 4.4.4-2 Zoning – South Campus* for the following discussion on existing zoning for and around the South Campus.

South Campus

The Campus section located in Orchard Park is designated R-1 Residential which allows for churches, schools, single-family dwellings, and agriculture. The minimum lot size for the R-1 Residential District is 40,000 square feet. The parcel with the ECC Alumni house is zoned B-2 Commercial, which allows numerous commercial uses, and has a minimum lot requirement of 20 acres.

The Town of Hamburg section of the Campus is designated as R-3 Multifamily District which allows hospitals, public and private institutions, dormitories, and multi-family dwellings, as well as several other uses deemed appropriate by the Town Planning Board under Special Use Permit review. The minimum lot size for parcels within this district varies from 2,000 square feet per dwelling unit to 8,125 square feet per dwelling unit.

New land use and development at ECC is not subject to the jurisdiction of either Hamburg or Orchard Park land use regulations, since the property is under the ownership of Erie County. However, once the property or any portion thereof is transferred out of County ownership, the existing zoning regulations will apply to any new land use or development. The transfer of property to private ownership, if a subdivision, may also be subject to the jurisdiction of the involved community.

Surrounding Areas

In Orchard Park, property located at the south and northeastern tip of the Campus are zoned B-2 Commercial with allowable uses and minimum lot size requirements as described above. Lands zoned as R-3 Residential are located to the south of the Campus on both the north and south side of Big Tree Road and to the north of the Campus across Southwestern Boulevard. This district has a minimum lot size requirement of 15,000 square feet per principal building and allows for single-family dwellings, religious uses, recreation uses, schools, tourists homes, and, under certain restrictions and conditions, two-family dwellings. Lands zoned R-1 Residential are located east of the Campus across Abbott Road and are occupied by Ralph Wilson Stadium. See above for a description of the allowable uses and minimum lot size requirements for the R-1 District.

FIGURE 4.4.4-2

ZONING – SOUTH CAMPUS

In Hamburg, property south-southwest of the Campus is zoned C-1 Local Retail Business District. This district allows for commercial uses under 15,000 square feet. Lands zoned as C-2 General Commercial District are located at the western tip of the Campus and allows for commercial uses up to 100,000 square feet. A small section of land zoned as C-3 Office District is located south of the Campus and allows for offices, recreational uses, and hospitals, as well as uses that are religious, charitable, rehabilitative, or philanthropic in nature. This district has a one-acre minimum lot size requirement for all principal uses and structures.

4.4.4.3 Aesthetics

The aesthetics of the South Campus are consistent with the suburban flavor of the surrounding area, with low profile buildings and open maintained suburban style lawns. The Campus is visible from all sides, but the dominant feature of the area is Ralph Wilson Stadium, which towers above all of the other uses. The expansive parking associated with the Stadium, as well as ECC, has the visual effect of exposing, but at the same time, flattening the rolling topography of the area. A radio tower on the South Campus is also very visible from off-campus locations.

4.4.4.4 Noise

Both the Town of Hamburg and the Town of Orchard Park have noise ordinances. And although ECC is not subject to local zoning regulations, any new development at the South Campus should take into consideration the potential noise-related impacts that may occur during construction due to the numerous residential dwellings that abut the Campus perimeter.

The current major sources of noise in and around the Campus are automobile-related, with occasional noise generated from recreational and sports activities taking place in the eastern portion of the Campus and at Ralph Wilson Stadium.

4.4.4.5 Lighting

Both the Town of Hamburg and the Town of Orchard Park have regulations pertaining to light impacts. An array of lighting illuminates the Campus at required locations. The football field on the South Campus is lighted during night games in the fall. The current lighting pattern does not contribute to any adverse impacts to adjoining properties. The general lighting of the Campus, street lights, and light sources from the surrounding areas are the major sources of ambient light in the area. During the fall, lighting from the Ralph Wilson Stadium significantly contributes to the ambient light in the region.

4.4.4.6 Community Recreational Facilities

The Town of Orchard Park has several parks and lands preserved for recreational purposes with the closest to the Campus being Burmon Honeycrest Recreation Playground to the north, and California Road Recreation Area to the South.

The Town of Hamburg has approximately 40 parks and recreation areas with the closest park to the Campus being Orchard Acres Park to the north.

4.4.4.7 Community Character

There is a unique mix of commercial, residential, recreational, and public uses surrounding the South Campus. The South Campus, its surrounding commercial uses, and Ralph Wilson Stadium are all significant community attractions and focal points. The Campus relates well to the surrounding uses, with the exception of the line of residential uses along the southern and eastern perimeters of the Campus. Also, there is an abrupt change from the large-lot commercial and public uses to the dense residential uses surrounding the Campus. However, the open space that exists on the Campus serves to soften this abrupt change in land use.

With U.S. Route 20 and 20A bordering the northern and southern perimeters of the Campus, the area experiences significant traffic flows and appears constantly busy throughout the day. ECC, the nearby commercial uses, especially the large-lot uses, and Ralph Wilson Stadium all contribute to the high activity of the area.

4.4.5 Existing Planning Initiatives and Land Use Plans

In July 2002, the Town and Village of Orchard Park, along with the School District, issued "The Orchard Park Plan." This Land Use Study is to be used with other reports and studies by the Town and Village Boards to create Comprehensive Plans for both the Town and Village. As of the date of preparation of this DGEIS, the Village and Town have yet to issue new Comprehensive Plans.

Accordingly, this DGEIS will use the list of six (6) Goals and Objectives of "The Orchard Park Plan" to assure that the Campus Master Plan will be in full conformance with the Town's goals and objectives. The executive summary states that the Goals and Objectives are the "big picture vision of the community, and should represent the overall guidance for all community decisions." The major goals of the community include:

1.) Preserve community character.

2.) Protect and preserve open space and prime farmlands.

3.) Protect significant environmental resources.

4.) Provide a safe and efficient transportation network that complements the existing Town and Village atmosphere.

5.) Maintain the existing high quality of life in the community.

6.) Support existing businesses and improve opportunities for developing new commercial and industrial enterprise.

In addition, the Town of Orchard Park conducted a Land Use Study that recommends very specific actions for the Town. Those that relate to the South Campus and surrounding areas are listed below:

- Utilize school facilities for community gathering places.
- Consider public transportation around Ralph Wilson Stadium.
- Re-zone the stadium area as commercial.
- Establish new design standards and guidelines such as buffers, landscaping, and tree preservation, among several others, for industrial development to minimize negative impacts to surrounding areas, especially residential neighborhoods.
- Encourage redevelopment/revitalization in the business district.
- Target tax incentive programs in older, existing commercially developed areas, such as around Ralph Wilson Stadium, cooperatively with the Town of Amherst.
- Develop hamlet-type zoning for Michael Road/Baker Road/Southwestern Boulevard area.
- Encourage community gathering places in all new developments.
- Improve walkability and access for bicycles in all school locations.
- Preserve open space and green space.
- Accommodate non-automobile traffic without sidewalks, with connective features such as greenways, parking, and recreational opportunities.
- Focus on access, landscaping, aesthetics, buffers, etc. for Southwestern Boulevard.

The Town of Hamburg 2010 Comprehensive Plan[33] identifies six (6) Goals and Objectives:

- The Town of Hamburg possesses excellent open space lands and conservation areas that should be preserved and protected as a part of future development.
  - Identify important open space areas in the Town and protect them from suburban growth.*
  - Preserve prime open space/conservation lands in designated districts.*

[33] Town of Hamburg, 2010 Comprehensive Plan (1997 Master Plan Update), Adopted June 1997 prepared by Wendel.

- The Town will encourage balanced growth to provide for a diverse living environment for its people, at all income levels, that builds upon past development and creates a safe environment for the future.
  - Protect existing residential neighborhoods from encroachment by incompatible uses.*
  - Provide for adequate buffering of future development.*
  - Accommodate a variety of residential housing types in the community.
  - Identify appropriate areas of prime commercial uses that serve the local residential, community-wide, and regional needs of the community.*
  - Encourage the consolidation of future commercial development for safety and convenience, and discourage strip development along major highways.*
  - Retain commercial business through adaptive re-use of existing commercial areas.
  - Maintain existing industrial development to accommodate Town needs as well as adaptive re-use and expansion of existing industrial areas.
- The Town will promote the full utilization of public facilities and services through the orderly development of future growth.
  - Encourage the "in-filling of appropriate vacant, developable areas by directing future growth into lands with adequate public services."*
  - Discourage urban development in areas without utilities (water and especially sewer).
  - Promote the fiscal viability of land development based on the costs of service provisions and the revenues generated from new growth.
  - Upgrade public sewer/water availability in existing service areas and provide new facilities consistent with orderly growth and development.
  - Critically review utility extensions into prime open space/environmentally restrictive areas.
- The natural resources of the Town will be protected by respecting the development limitations of environmentally sensitive areas and preserving their integrity.
  - Protect streams and floodplains from encroachment as natural drainage channels for storm water.

- Restrict development in designated wetlands in accordance with State and Federal regulations.

- Identify major natural resources (creeks and streams, woodlands, wildlife habitats, beach areas, etc.) and critically review from encroachment by future development.

- Identify poor soil and drainage characteristics that would limit the type or intensity of future growth.

Á The open character of the Town will be encouraged to ensure the conservation of community resources for future generations.

- Continue to reference and use the Open Space/Recreation Plan as a guide for future preservation and conservation.

- Coordinate planning policies and techniques between legislative and community boards (i.e., Planning Board, Town Board, Conservation Advisory Board, Traffic Safety Advisory Board, Shoreline Revitalization Committee, Recreation Advisory Board, Zoning Board of Appeals).

- Preserve existing open space/recreation and conservation areas for future use.

- Identify appropriate areas for adequate open space/recreation development for new growth.

- Provide for local community needs in the development of future public and semi-public uses.

Á The Town will strive to improve an integrated transportation system to provide for the movement of residents, workers, visitors, and goods, in a safe and efficient manner.

- Promote the adequate design of the road system to assure efficient access to development and adequate movement of traffic.

- Encourage the expansion of public transportation to adequately serve the Town's needs.

- Support the retention of rail rights-of-way for the movement of goods and passengers in the Town.

- Encourage the future development of land in accordance with the availability of adequate access and consistent with the objectives of the transportation system.

- Coordinate multi-modal (auto, transit, pedestrian, bicycle, rail) conditions and future plans between Town, County, regional, and State agencies.

The Hamburg Comprehensive Plan also recommends specific new zoning for the South Campus area, such as limited Neighborhood Commercial, or new office-type commercial zoning. Performance-type zoning that states objectives and limitations on commercial development is also suggested in the Plan.

With respect to the U.S. Route 20/Southwestern Boulevard and U.S. Route 20A/Big Tree Road intersection also known as "Seven Corners," the following community character mitigation measures are listed in the Hamburg Plan:

- Coordinate development.
- Limit points of ingress/egress, require "shared" access between commercial sites.
- Establish architectural standards.
- Establish landscape requirements.
- Require "buffer" areas from adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Initiate other design requirements including lighting design, review of refuse storage (enclosed dumpsters), review of service delivery locations, establishment of practical hours of operation, review of signage requirements and locations, etc.

The Plan also makes general recommendations for this area:

- Require no residential infringement in area, and maintain character of adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Do not allow commercial growth outside of McKinley Parkway strip.
- McKinley Parkway, north of Milestrip Road (NYS Route 179), is a transition area—a mix of neighborhood-type commercial and residential uses (west side commercial/multi-residential, east side predominantly residential). Careful consideration to all rezoning requests should be given to protect existing residents and businesses.
- No further commercial uses permitted south of the current and designated commercial development projects (near the Seven Corners intersection). Rush Creek Park and other wooded areas will help to continue to buffer residential areas to the south.
- Coordinate discussions with Erie County and New York State Department of Transportation to improve infrastructure (especially road) and operational improvements along McKinley Parkway, Big Tree Road, and Southwestern Boulevard (U.S. Route 20), also known as "Seven Corners."

- To properly accomplish coordinating development, regulating ingress and egress points, providing shared access, and creating an Access Management Plan should be considered for this area.

4.4.6 Pipeline Project Inventory for Cumulative Impact Analysis

Refer to *DGEIS Section 4.2.6* for an overview of the Cumulative Impact Analysis methodology used in this DGEIS.

Pipeline Projects

Ten (10) projects approved or pending approval have been identified within a one-mile radius of the South Campus in the Towns of Hamburg and Orchard Park. These projects were identified with assistance from Town officials. These projects include five (5) housing projects and two (2) commercial establishments, along with a small industrial building and a similarly sized institutional facility within an existing industrial park.

4.4.7 Community Services

4.4.7.1 Existing Utilities

4.4.7.1.1 Water

The South Campus has public water service provided by the Erie County Water Authority. Management of the public water supply occurs through local water districts. Orchard Park has recently completed a comprehensive study of the public water system. A comprehensive water system improvement project was a primary recommendation in the study. The improvement project would increase fire protection in addition to improving pressures and efficiency.[34]

4.4.7.1.2 Sewer

Public sanitary sewer consists of a network of collections and treatment plants. The South Campus is served by Erie County Sewer District (ECSD) #3 in both the Town of Hamburg and the Town of Orchard Park. The Erie County/Southern Sewage Treatment Agency is an independent agency that owns, manages, and operates the sewer system.

4.4.7.1.3 Campus HVAC Systems

A central boiler plant located in the Facilities Building heats all buildings on the South Campus. Hot water is distributed throughout the campus via a two-pipe changeover system with piping run within an underground pipe tunnel from Building 7 to Building 5. Piping is then run in the ceiling space of each building to a pump room where it is distributed to terminal units within that building.

All buildings on the campus are air conditioned by a central chiller plant located in Building 7. Chilled water is distributed throughout the campus via the two-pipe changeover system described above.

[34] Id 29 at

4.4.7.1.4 Electrical Power

Electricity is provided to the South Campus by Niagara Mohawk, a National Grid Company. Most of the building power distribution panels are filled to capacity and have little or no room to add any new circuit breakers. The incoming 34.5kV service comes into the main switchgear located in the Facilities Building. There is an existing gas well located west of parking Lot A.

4.4.7.1.5 Natural Gas

The South Campus obtains natural gas from the on-site well.

4.4.7.1.6 Telecommunications

The majority of telecommunication services for the South Campus are provided by Adelphia Communications. Business telephone lines are served by Verizon. Internet service is provided through a link with the University at Buffalo and the campus T1 lines are leased through Adelphia Communications.

The telecommunications network on the South Campus is in good condition with the installation of Cisco equipment bringing 10/100 to the desktop, which also exists for the North Campus. A point-to-point dedicated T3 line connects the North and South Campuses. The Library and boardrooms are wireless and students and administration should have wireless access in the near future. In the next few years, classrooms will also be wireless. The College is considering running courses requiring laptops and looking forward to increased video conferencing capabilities between campuses.

4.4.7.2 Emergency and Protective Services

4.4.7.2.1 Police

Police protection in the Town of Hamburg is provided by the Hamburg Police Department and by the Orchard Park Police Department in the Town of Orchard Park. The Hamburg Police Department serves over 56,000 residents in an area covering forty-eight square miles. Currently, Hamburg has 65 sworn officers, 20 dispatchers, and three dog control officers. In addition, there are four clerical staff to assist in the operation of the department. The Erie County Sheriff's Department also provides police services for the South Campus region.

4.4.7.2.2 Fire

Fire protection for Orchard Park is provided by the Orchard Park Fire Company. Fire protection for Hamburg is provided through nine Fire Districts located in the Town. Those districts include Armor Volunteer, Big Tree Volunteer, Blasdell Volunteer, Hamburg, Lake Shore Volunteer, Lake View, Newton Abbott Volunteer, Scranton Volunteer, and Woodlawn Volunteer.

4.4.7.2.3 EMS

Emergency medical services are provided through the Emergency Management Team in the Town of Hamburg. In the Town of Orchard Park, the Orchard Park Fire Company provides emergency services.

4.4.7.3 Waste Management

Waste management in the Town of Orchard Park is provided by NEI, a private company. NEI has been servicing Orchard Park for approximately two years.

4.4.7.4 Educational Facilities

The South Campus is located within two school districts, the Hamburg Central School District and the Orchard Park Central School District. However, only a small portion of the Campus is in the Hamburg Central School District. The student enrollment in Hamburg Central was approximately 9,000, and the projected 2000 enrollment was 10,323 students. The Orchard Park District serves an area of 50 square miles that includes portions of Orchard Park, West Seneca, Hamburg, Boston, Elma, and Aurora. Approximately 5,400 students are enrolled in the four elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school.

4.4.8 Historic and Archaeological Resources

The distribution of previously recorded prehistoric and historic archaeological sites noted in *DGEIS Section 4.2.11* above, along with other background research data, suggests that the project area has a low to moderate sensitivity for villages, large recurrently occupied camps, mounds, and burial sites. There is a moderate sensitivity for small camps, lithic scatters, and artifact findspots. The lack of archaeological sites in the project area may be attributed to a lack of any sizable streams within, or very near, the project area's boundaries, or the lack of prior archaeological study.

The site files indicate that there are no National Register Listed, or National Register Eligible structures completely within, adjacent to, or within the viewshed of the South Campus project area. There are sixty-three (63) structures within the project area that are older than 50 years of age and have not been inventoried.

The results of the Phase 1A Site Search and Literature Research for the South Campus project area indicates that cultural resources may potentially exist. A Phase 1B Reconnaissance Survey: Field Investigation is recommended if future development is anticipated in the South Campus project area. The scope of the Phase 1B Reconnaissance Survey cannot be determined without refinement of the boundary limits. The potential need for focused site examination and data recovery/mitigation stages cannot be determined until a Phase 1B Reconnaissance Survey: Field Investigation is conducted. The Phase 1B Reconnaissance Survey should comply with New York Archaeological Council (NYAC 1994 and 2000) Work Scope Specifications. Refer to *DGEIS Appendix B* for the Phase 1A Report, which includes an inventory of the existing historic, cultural, and prehistoric conditions for the South Campus.

4.4.9 Public Health – Hazardous Materials

4.4.9.1 Pertinent On-site Environmental Information

4.4.9.1.1 Waste Generation

The South Campus is registered as an RCRA small quantity (hazardous waste) generator. Only one violation was found. It occurred in May 1992 and was an informal written notification of manifest and generator violations apparently associated with paperwork, oversight, and documentation.

4.4.9.1.2 Petroleum Storage

Database searches (ECC was unable to provide specific information for this Campus) indicate that between three and five petroleum storage tanks exist. Records appear to indicate three 10,000-gallon fuel oil tanks are associated with an emergency heating supply for three of the buildings. Additionally, two 1,000-gallon aboveground storage tanks providing unleaded gas and diesel fuel exist at the Campus.

Historical leaking tank and spill data indicate five tanks have been installed and subsequently removed or closed. In 1988, a tank test failure led to the closure of a tank in 1989. Tank #1 (10,000-gallon fuel oil tank) installed in 1973 was closed in 2001. Tank #2, a 2,000-gallon unleaded gasoline tank installed in 1973, was removed in 2001. Tank #3 (2,000-gallon leaded gasoline tank) installed in 1973 was removed in 2001. Also, Tank #5, an aboveground 300-gallon diesel tank installed in 1988 was removed in 2001.

4.4.9.1.3 Asbestos

No Asbestos Management Plan was available for the South Campus, although one was reportedly performed. A search of Erie County Department of Public Works archives was unable to locate such a document. However, the archive search did identify that some asbestos investigation and abatement was planned and may have been carried out.

In 1992, four samples of sprayed-on fireproofing and other material from Building 5 were sampled, analyzed, and found not to contain asbestos. In 1989, Building 5 wall tiles were sampled and found to contain asbestos in the television studio, dance studio, radio clubroom, and ping pong clubroom. Abatement of at least the television studio was bid in 1990. However, no documentation on completion of the abatement could be found.

Based on the age of the facility, construction materials utilized at that time, and reported data, there is a reasonable possibility that some asbestos-containing materials were used in construction and may still exist on this Campus.

4.4.9.2 Pertinent Off-site Environmental Information

4.4.9.2.1 Waste Generation

Ralph Wilson Stadium and Wal-Mart are listed as small quantity hazardous waste generators near the Campus. No violations were found.

4.4.9.2.2 Petroleum Storage

Several businesses surrounding the South Campus have or have had underground storage tanks or reported spills.

The Mobil Station at 3856 Southwestern Boulevard (corner of Abbott Road) has multiple incidents reported from 1988 through 2001 associated with underground storage tanks and leaks. The facility appears to be a sufficient distance from existing ECC buildings to minimize risks from this site.

TB Automotive at 4243 Abbott Road has a spill report from 1995 and this report was closed in 1996. Also, three underground storage tanks (one with a capacity of 1,000 gallons and two with capacities of 4,000 gallons each) were previously present at the site and were closed in 1995. The facility also appears to be a sufficient distance from ECC to minimize risks from this site.